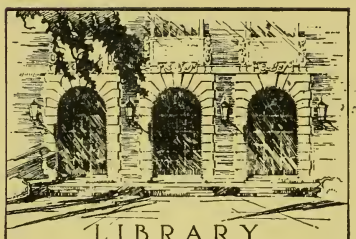

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TRADITIONAL TALES

OF THE

ENGLISH AND SCOTTISH PEASANTRY.

BY ALLAN CUNNINGHAM,

AUTHOR OF SIR MARMADUKE MAXWELL, A DRAMATIC POEM; &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

"Nor hill, nor brook, we paced along,
But had its legend, or its song."

Sir Walter Scott.

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CONTENTS

OF

VOL. II.

	Page
Miles Colvine, the Cumberland Mariner	1
Honest Man John Ochiltree	43
Elphin Irving, the Fairies' Cupbearer	89
Richard Faulder, Mariner	123
The last Lord of Helvellyn	151
Judith Macrone, the Prophetess	186
The Ghost with the Golden Casket	223
The Haunted Ships	258
Death of the Laird of Warlsworm	296
The Seven Foresters of Chatsworth; an ancient Derbyshire Ballad	338

MILES COLVINE,

THE CUMBERLAND MARINER.

"William Glen was our captain's name;
He was a bold and a tall young man,
As brave a sailor as e'er sailed the sea,
And he was bound for New Barbarie.

"The first of April we spread our sail,
To a low, a sweet, and a pleasant gale;
With a welcome wind on a sunny sea,
Away we sailed for New Barbarie.

"We had not sailed more days than two,
Till the sky waxed dark and the tempest blew;
The lightning flashed, and loud roared the sea,
As we were bound for New Barbarie."

Old Ballad.

On the Cumberland side of the firth of Solway lies a long line of flat and unelevated coast, where the sea-fowl find refuge from the gun of the fowler, and which, save the barren land and the deep sea, presents but one object to our notice,—

the ruins of a rude cottage, once the residence of MILES COLVINE, the Mariner. The person who built this little house of refuge,—a seaman, a soldier, a scholar, and a gentleman,—suffered shipwreck on the coast; and it was not known for a time that any one else had escaped from the fatal storm. His vessel was from a foreign land—had no merchandise aboard, nor seemed constructed for traffic; and when the tempest drove her along the Allanbay shore, three persons only were visible on deck. Something mysterious hung over the fate of the vessel and crew. The conduct of Miles Colvine was less likely to remove than confirm suspicion; he was a silent and melancholy man; and when the peasantry who saved him from the storm inquired concerning the history of his ship and seamen, he heard them, but answered them not, and seemed anxious to elude all conversation on the subject. As they stood on the beach, looking at

the bursting of the billows, and listening to the howling of the storm, the remains of the ship were shivered to pieces, and a large portion of the deck floated ashore at their feet. The planks seemed stained with blood and with wine; and as the peasants hauled it out to the dry land, one of them asked him if it was wet with the blood of beasts or men. "With the blood of both," was the answer. They left the shore, and sought no farther intercourse with him.

Where the vessel was wrecked, there he seemed determined to remain; — he built a little hut, fenced it round with a wall of loose stone, and lived in it without molestation from any one. He shunned the fishermen of Allanbay and the seamen of Skinverness; nor seemed pleased when the children of the peasantry carried him little presents of food; — he sought and found his subsistence in the water. It was the common remark of the fishermen, that no man dipped a hook, or wetted a net,

between Skinverness and Saint Bees, with greater skill and success. In this solitude, exposed to every storm that swept the beach from sea or land, amid much seeming wretchedness and privation, he resided during a summer and autumn: winter, a season of great severity on an unsheltered coast, was expected either to destroy or drive him from his dwelling; but he braved every storm, and resisted all offers of food or raiment.

The first winter of his abode was one of prodigious storm and infinite hardship. The snow lay long and deep on the ground, the ice was thick on lake and pool, and the Solway presented one continual scene of commotion and distress. The shore was covered with the wrecks of ships, the eddies choked with drowned men, and the sea itself so rough and boisterous, that the fishermen suspended their customary labours, and sat with their families at the hearth-fire, listening to the sounding of the surge, and relating tales of maritime dis-

aster and shipwreck. But on Miles Colvine the severe and continued storm seemed to have no influence. He ranged the shore, collecting for his fire the wrecks of ships; he committed his nets and hooks to the sea with his usual skill; and having found a drifted boat, which belonged to some unfortunate vessel, he obtained command over the element most congenial to his heart, and wandered about on the bosom of the waters noon and night, more like a troubled spirit than a human being. When the severity of winter had passed away, and sea-birds laid their eggs in the sand, the Mariner remitted his excursions at sea, and commenced a labour which surprised many. The sea shore, or that portion of the coast which lies between the margin of the sea and the cultivated land,—a region of shells, drift sand, and pebbles,—has ever been regarded as a kind of common; and the right of suspending nets, hauling boats aground, and constructing huts for the summer residence

of the fishermen, has never been disputed by the owners of those thriftless domains. It was on this debateable ground, between the barren sea and the cultivated field, that the Mariner fixed his abode; but it soon appeared that he wished to extend his possessions, and augment his household accommodation. He constructed a larger and more substantial house, with equal attention to durability and neatness; he fenced off the sea by a barrier of large stones, and scattered around his dwelling a few of the common flowers which love to blossom near the sea breeze. The smoke of his chimney, and the unremitting clank of his hammer finishing the interior accommodations, were seen and heard from afar. When all this was concluded, he launched his boat and took to the sea again, and became known from the Mull of Galloway to the foot of Annan-water.

I remember, the first time that ever I saw him was in the market-place of Dum-

fries: his beard seemed of more than a year's growth,—his clothes, once rich and fine, were darned and patched,—and over the whole he wore a kind of boat-cloak, which, fastened round his neck, descended nigh the ground; but all this penury could not conceal the step and air of other and better days. He seldom looked in the face of any one; man he seemed to regard with an eye of scorn, and even deadly hatred; but on women he looked with softness and regard: and when he happened to meet a mother and child, he gazed on them with an eye of settled sorrow and affection. He once made a full stop, and gazed on a beautiful girl of four or five years old, who was gathering primroses on the margin of the Nith; the child, alarmed at his uncouth appearance, shrieked, and fell, in its fright, into the deep stream; the Mariner made but one spring from the bank into the river, saved the child, replaced it in its mother's bosom, and resumed his journey, apparently uncon-

scious that he had done aught remarkable. Ever after this, the children of Dumfries pursued him with the hue and cry, " Eh ! come and see the wild bearded man, who saved Mary Lawson."

On another occasion, I was hunting on the Scottish mountain of Criffel, and, having reached its summit, I sat down to look around on the fine prospect of sea and land below me, and take some refreshment. At a little distance I saw something like the figure of a human being, bedded in the heath, and lying looking on the Solway from a projecting rock, so still and motionless that it seemed dead. I went near : it was Miles Colvine ; he seemed unconscious of my approach, and, looking steadfastly on the sea, remained fixed, and muttering, as long as I continued on the mountain. Indeed, wherever he went, he talked more like a man holding communion with his own mind, than one sharing his thoughts with others ; and the general purport of such imperfect sentences as could be heard

was, that he had doomed many men to perish for some irreparable wrong they had offered to a lady. Sometimes he spoke of the lady as his wife, or his love, and the men he had destroyed as the lawless crew of his own vessel. At other times he addressed his seamen as spirits, whom he had sent to be tortured for wrongs done in the body, and his lady as an angel that still visited his daily dreams and his nightly visions. Through the whole of these wayward musings the cry of revenge, and the sense of deep injury, were heard and understood by all.

When Miles Colvine had fairly finished his new residence, and the flowers and fruits had returned to field and tree, he was observed to launch his boat: this was a common occurrence, but a small lair of seal-skins, a jar of water, and some dried fish, called kippered salmon by the Scotch, looked like preparation for a long voyage. The voyage was begun, for he was seen scudding away southward, by the light of the stars, and no more was seen or heard

of him for some time. Day after day his door continued shut, his chimney ceased to smoke, and his nets hung unemployed. At length the revenue cutter from Saint Bees arrived at Allanbay, to land a cargo of fine Holland gin, which the officers had taken from an Irish smuggler, between Carrickfergus and the Isle of Man. They had been terribly alarmed, they said, on their way, by the appearance, about the third watch of the night, of a visionary boat, navigated by a bearded fiend, which scudded with supernatural swiftness along the surface of the water. This tale, with all the variations which a poetical peasantry readily supply, found its way from cottage to hamlet, and from hamlet to hall. Old men shook their heads, and talked of the exploits of the great fiend by sea and land, and wished that good might happen to Old England from the visit of such a circumnavigator. Others, who were willing to believe that the apparition was Miles Colvine on a coasting voyage, seemed no less

ready to confound the maritime recluse with an evil being, who had murdered a whole ship's crew, sunk their ship, and dwelt on the coast of "cannie Cumberland," for the express purpose of raising storms, shaking corn, and making unwedded mothers of half the fair damsels between Sarkfoot and Saint Bees. Several misfortunes of the latter kind, which happened about this time, confirmed this suspicion, and his departure from the coast was as welcome as rain to the farmer after a long drought.

About a fortnight after this event, I happened to be on a moonlight excursion by water, as far as the ruined castle of Comlongan. I was accompanied by an idle friend or two, and, on our return, we allowed the receding tide to carry us along the Cumberland coast, till we came nearly opposite the cottage of Miles Colvine. As we directed our boat to the shelter of a small bank, I observed a light glimmering in the Mariner's house; and landing and approaching closer, I saw plainly the shadows of two

persons, one tall and manly, the other slim and sylph-like, passing and repassing on the wall. I soon obtained a fairer view. I saw the Mariner himself; his dress, once rude and sordid, was replaced by one of the coarsest materials, but remarkably clean; his beard was removed, and his hair, lately matted and wild, now hung orderly about his neck and temples. The natural colour was black; but it had been changed by grief to snow-white; his look was hale, but sorrowful, and he seemed about forty years of age. The figure of the creature that accompanied him was much too tender and beautiful to last long in a situation so rude and unprotected as the cottage of a fisherman. It was a female, richly dressed, and of a beauty so exquisite, and a look so full of sweetness and grace, that the rude scene around was not wanted to exalt her above all other maidens I had ever seen. She glided about the cottage, arranging the various articles of furniture, and passing two white hands, outrivalling the fairest creations of the sculptor,

over the rude chairs and tables, and every moment giving a glance at the Mariner, like one who took delight in pleasing him, and seemed to work for his sake. And he was pleased. I saw him smile, and no one had ever seen him smile before; he passed his hand over the long clustering tresses of the maiden; caused her to sit down beside him, and looked on her face, which outgrowing the child had not yet grown into woman, with a look of affection, and reverence, and joy.

I was pondering on what I witnessed, and imagining an interview with the unhappy Mariner and his beautiful child, for such his companion was, when I observed the latter take out a small musical instrument from a chest. She touched its well-ordered strings with a light and a ready hand, and played several of the simple and plaintive airs so common among the peasantry of the Scottish and English coasts. After a pause she resumed her music, and, to an air singularly wild and melancholy,

sang the following ballad, which relates, no doubt, to the story of her father's and mother's misfortunes; but the minstrel has observed a mystery in his narrative which excites suspicion rather than gratifies curiosity:—

O MARINER, O MARINER.

1.

O mariner, O mariner,
When will our gallant men
Make our cliffs and woodlands ring
With their homeward hail agen?
Full fifteen paced the stately deck,
And fifteen stood below,
And maidens waved them from the shore,
With hands more white than snow;
All underneath them flash'd the wave,
The sun laugh'd out aboon,
Will they come bounding homeward
By the waning of yon moon?

2.

O maid, the moon shines lovely down,
The stars all brightly burn,
And they may shine till doomsday comes,
Ere your true love return;

O'er his white forehead roll the waves,
The wind sighs lowne and low,
And the cry the sea-fowl uttereth
Is one of wail and woe;
So wail they on, I tell thee, maid,
One of thy tresses dark
Is worth all the souls who perish'd
In that good and gallant bark.

3.

O mariner, O mariner,
It's whisper'd in the hall,
And sung upon the mountain side
Among our maidens all,
That the waves which fill the measure
Of that wide and fatal flood,
Cannot cleanse the decks of thy good ship,
Or wash thy hands from blood;
And sailors meet, and shake their heads,
And, ere they sunder, say,
God keep us from Miles Colvine,
On the wide and watery way!

4.

And up then spoke he, Miles Colvine,
His thigh thus smiting soon,
By all that's dark aneath the deep,
By all that's bright aboon,

By all that's blessed on the earth,
Or blessed on the flood,
And by my sharp and stalwart blade
That revel'd in their blood—
I could not spare them; for there came
My loved one's spirit nigh,
With a shriek of joy at every stroke
That doom'd her foes to die.

5.

" O mariner, O mariner,
There was a lovely dame,
Went down with thee unto the deep,
And left her father's hame."—
His dark eyes, like a thunder cloud,
Did rain and lighten fast,
And, oh! his bold and martial face
All grimly grew and ghast:
I loved her, and those evil men
Wrong'd her as far we ranged;
But were ever woman's woes and wrongs
More fearfully avenged?

The ballad had proceeded thus far, when a band of smugglers, from the coasts of Ireland and Scotland, uniting the reckless desperation of the former with the craft

and tact of the latter, attracted by the secure and naked coast, and perhaps by the lonely house, which presented hope of plunder with little appearance of resistance, landed to the number of seven, and, leaping over the exterior wall, seized the door and shook it violently, calling loudly for admittance. I lay down, with my two companions, behind a small hillock covered with furze, to see the issue of this visit; for at that time I imagined the Mariner maintained some mysterious correspondence with these fierce and lawless men.

" Open the door," said one, in a strong Irish accent, " or, by the powers, I'll blow your cabin to peelings of potatoes about your ears, my darlings."

" Hout, Patrick, or what's your name," said one of his comrades, in Lowland Scotch, " ye mauna gang that rough way to wark; we maun speak kindly and cannilie, man, till we get in our hand, and then we can take it a' our ain way, like

Willie Wilson's sow, when she ran off with the knife in her neck."

The Mariner, on hearing this dialogue, prepared himself for resistance, like one perfectly well acquainted with such rencounters. With a sword in one hand, a cocked pistol in the other, and a brace in his belt, he posted himself behind the door, and, in a low voice, admonished his daughter to retire to a little chamber constructed for her accommodation. With a voice which, though quivering with emotion, lost nothing of its native sweetness, the young maiden answered, "Oh, let me be near you!—let me but be near you!"

Her low and gentle voice was drowned in the wild exclamations of one of the smugglers. "Och, my dears, let us break the door, and clap a red turf to the roof, and all to give me light to see to kiss this maiden with the sweet voice. By the holy poker that stirred the turf fire beneath the first potatoe, I have not been

within seven acres broad of a woman since we sailed with Miles Colvine's lady. And, by the bagpiper, she was a bouncer; and a pretty din she made about it, after all, and took it into her head to shriek till the shores rang, and pray till the saints grew deaf; ah, my hearties, it wouldn't do. — What the devil holds this door? — stand by till I show you how handsomely I'll pitch it against the wall. Ah, I wish you had seen me when I upset the house of Ranald Mullagen, in Lurgen, and made the bonniest blaze you ever saw in the wide world, at all, at all."

And, setting his shoulders to the door, he thrust with all his might; but, though seconded by his comrades, who seemed all alike eager for violence, the door resisted his utmost efforts.

"Stand back, my darlings," said the miscreant, "I'll show you a trick worth two of this; I'll teach you how we bring out a bonnie lass from a bolted chamber in little Ireland."

So saying, he proceeded to prime a pistol, having previously hammered the flint with a little steel cross, curiously chased and ornamented, which he took from his bosom. "Ah," said he, "may the devil cork me up in a stone bottle, and send me to seek out the latitude of the lake of darkness, if I don't carve up that old he-goat into relics! — Now, come on, my early boys — my souls of boys; the boy that won't do as I do deserves to be whipped through Purgatory with the tail of St. Patrick's ass. Thack and thunder! hell's to hinder us when I snap my pistol under the thatch."

In a moment the door opened, Miles Colvine stood on the threshold, a cocked pistol in his right hand, his sword gleaming in his left, his eyes shooting from them a fierce dark light, but his manner perfectly calm and collected. Behind him came the beautiful form of his daughter, with a pistol in her hand, and shuddering from head to foot at the immediate peril which seemed

to beset her father. These maritime desperadoes started back at this sudden apparition of an armed man; and even their miscreant leader, forward as he was, recoiled a pace or two. The Mariner eyed him for a moment, and said, "Did my sword then do its work slovenly, and did the deep sea not devour thee, thou immeasurable villain? but God has given thee back to earth, to become a warning how sure and how certain just vengeance is." And leaping on him as he spoke, I saw the pistol flash, and the gleam of the descending sword, in almost the same instant. I instantly started up with my companions, and the smugglers, perceiving this reinforcement, carried off their companion, groaning, and cursing, and praying; and pushing their boat from the shore, vanished along the misty bosom of the summer sea.

I found Miles Colvine standing on the threshold of his house, and his daughter on her knees beside him. He knew me, for we had often passed each other on the

beach and on the sea, and he was aware that I was a friend, for I had endeavoured in vain to oblige him in his forlorn state with little acts of kindness.

" Come hither, sir," said the Mariner, " I have to thank you for aid this night." He paused for a moment, and then said in a lower tone, " I know your faith is not my faith, and that your life is not embittered with what has embittered mine. But tell me, sir, tell me, do you believe that the events of our life are ordained? for what hath happened to-night seems of a wise Being's ordering."

" Surely, sir," I said, " God knoweth all things, present and to come; but, whether he permits evil deeds to be wrought, or ordains good ones to be done"—

" Enough, enough," said the Mariner. " May Colvine, my love, trim thy father's shealing, and set the supper-table in array, for it is ordained that our deliverers shall rest with us, and break bread at our board; so come in."

And into the Mariner's cottage we walked, not unawed by the presence of a being of whose temper and courage we had seen such a proof.

If the exterior of the cottage was rude and unskilfully built, the interior was wonderfully commodious and neat. The floor was laid of drifted ship timber, and the walls were hung with nets as with tapestry; and fish-spears, and gaff-hooks of steel, sharp and bright, were grouped like weapons for battle in a chieftain's hall of old. The fruits of the fisherman's skill were every where visible; the chimney-mantle, a beam of wood which extended from side to side of the cottage, was covered with kippered salmon, large, and red, and savoury, and various kegs were filled with salted fish of the many excellent kinds which the Solway affords. A small bed stood near the chimney, swelled with the feathers of sea-fowl, and hillocked high with quilts and mantles, from beneath which some linen looked out, only rivalled in whiteness by the snow. A very

small chamber was constructed at the farther end, into which May Colvine disappeared for a moment to re-adjust her dress, and, perhaps, add some other of those artificial attractions which women always bring in to the aid of their natural charms. The Mariner seated himself, motioned me to a seat, over which a seal-skin was thrown, while a lamp, fed plentifully with oil, and suspended from the roof, diffused light over the apartment. Nor was the place devoted to brute comfort alone: several books, among which I observed Robinson Crusoe, and Homer's Odyssey in Greek, with a curious collection of Northern legendary ballads, were scattered about, and a shepherd's pipe and a fiddle were there to bring music to assist in the dissipation of melancholy thought.

May Colvine now came forth from her little chamber, with an increase of loveliness, such as a rose appears when refreshed in dew. She had laid aside the snood of silk and pearl which enclosed her hair, and

the curling luxuriance of her ringlets descended over her shoulders, while her white temples, and whiter neck, were seen through the waving fleece which fell so profusely over them. Her father gazed on her like one who recals the lovely past in the beautiful present; and his thoughts had flitted to other days and remoter climes, for after a brief reverie he said, " Come, my love, the vessel is ready, the mariners aboard, the sails spread to the wind, and we must pass the haunted headland before the moon goes down."

The maiden meanwhile had filled the supper-board with such coarse fare as the cabin afforded, and addressing her father said, " Sir, the table is prepared, your guests are waiting, and will expect you to bless the fare which is set before them."

The Mariner laid his hat aside, and sitting in his place, after the manner of the Presbyterians, said, " Thou who spreadest thy table on the deep waters, and rainest down abundance in the desert places, make

this coarse food seem savoury and delicate unto these three men, and this tender virgin; but my hands, on which the blood of man yet reeks unatoned for, may not presume to touch blessed food." And spreading the fold of his mantle over his face, and stooping down, he appeared to busy himself in mental devotion, while, tasting the supper set before us, and obeying the mute invitation of the maiden to a glass of water, we complied with all the forms which this extraordinary audience seemed to impose upon us.

After this was past, the young woman took up one of the instruments, and singing as she played, with inexpressible sweetness and grace, her father gradually uncovered his face,—his looks began to brighten, and uttering a deep sigh, he waved his hand, the minstrelsy ceased, and he thus addressed us: —

" I was not always an unhappy man,— I had fair domains, a stately house, a beauteous wife, and a sweet daughter; but it

is not what we have, but what we enjoy, that blesseth man's heart, and makes him as one of the angels. I dwelt on a wild sea-coast, far from here, full of woods and caverns, the haunt of a banditti of smugglers, those fierce, and vulgar, and intractable spirits, who find subsistence in fraud and violence, and, from a continued perseverance in hostility to human law, become daily more hardened of heart and fierce of nature. I was young and romantic; and though I did not approve of the course of these men's lives, there appeared glimpses of generosity, and courage, and fortitude, about them, which shed a halo over a life of immorality and crime. I protected them not, neither did I associate with them; but they soon saw in the passive manner in which I regarded their nocturnal intercourse with the coast, and the ready and delighted ear which I lent to the narratives of their adventures by sea and land, that they had nothing to fear and much to hope. Their confidence increased, and their numbers

augmented; and they soon found a leader capable of giving an aim to all their movements, and who brought something like regular craft and ability to their counsels.

" I was reputed rich, and was rich; my treasures were mostly of gold and silver plate, and bars of the former metal, the gain of a relative who had shared with the Buccaneers in the plunder of Panama. I had also been wedded for a number of years, my wife was young and beautiful, and our daughter, an only child, my own May Colvine, here where she sits, was in her thirteenth year, with a frame that seemed much too delicate to survive the disasters she has since been doomed to meet. We were counselled to carry her to warmer climates, and were preparing for our voyage, and my wife was ready to accompany me; when a large smuggling cutter cast anchor in a deep woody bay which belonged to my estate, and as I sat on the top of my house, looking towards the sea, a person in a naval dress came

and accosted me. He was, he said, the captain of the free trader lying in the bay, with a cargo of choice wine, and his mariners, bold lads and true, had periled themselves freely by land and water, and often experienced the protection of Miles Colvine's bay, and the hospitality of his menials. They had heard of my intention to carry my wife and daughter to a more genial climate; and, if we wished to touch at Lisbon, or to go to any of the islands where Europeans seek for health, they would give us a passage, for they honoured us next to commerce without law or restraint.

"But, I must tell you, that the chief of this band, knowing my love for marvellous tales, hinted, that he had men on board, who, to the traditionary lore of their maritime ancestors, added their own adventures and deeds; and could, with the romantic ballads of Denmark and Sweden, mingle the Troubadour tales of France, the Moorish legends of Spain, and the singular narratives

which survive among the peasantry on my native coast. To soothe and propitiate my wife, he had recourse to another charm; from the pocket of a long boat-cloak he produced a mantle of the most precious fabric, and spreading it out before her, with all its rich variety of colour, and Eastern profusion of ornament, offered it as an humble present from himself and his mariners. I need not prolong this part of my narrative; we embarked at twilight, and standing out of the bay, dropped anchor till morning dawn. The captain sat armed beside us; this excited no suspicion, for he went commonly armed, and related adventures of a daring and remarkable kind which had befallen him on foreign shores, with a liveliness, and a kind of maritime grace, which were perfectly captivating. All night we heard overhead the tramp and the din of sailors passing and repassing, and with the grey of the morning we plucked up our anchor, spread our sails to a shrill wind, shot away seaward, and my native land

vanished from my view. All was life and gladness; we danced and we sang on deck, and drained cups of the purest wine; while the breeze favoured us, and the sky remained unclouded and serene.

"When the spice groves of one of the Portuguese islands appeared before us, the sun was setting, and it was resolved we should remain at the entrance of a bay till day-light. We were crowded on the deck, looking on the green and beauteous land, and a gentle seaward wind wafted the perfume of the forest about us. My wife was in the bloom of youth and beauty, full of health, and life, and love; and as she stood leaning on my arm, the sailors smoothed their rough looks, and refrained from curses, so much were they touched by her beauty; but this awe lasted but a little while. The captain was merry far beyond his usual measure of delight, and drained one wine cup after another to my wife's health and mine; he vowed I was as a god among his men, and that my wife was reverenced as a

divinity. ‘ But come,’ said he, ‘ Miles Colvine, I have a curious and a cunning thing to show you, which you alone deserve to see; I got it among the Moors, so come, and come alone.’

“ I rose, and followed him, for my curiosity was unbounded; he conducted me below, and, opening a small wicket in the wall of his cabin with a key, ushered me in, and closing it suddenly upon me, locked it; and then I heard him bounding up the stair to the deck. I stood half imagining this to be a jest, or something, at least, of a light nature; but shriek after shriek of my wife, uttered in the piercing agony of anguish and despair, soon undeceived me. I called, I entreated, I used force, and though I was armed by anger and despair with almost supernatural might, the door withstood all my efforts. But why should I dwell upon a scene of such unutterable misery? What I endured, and what the woman I loved and adored suffered, are fit only to be imagined, not, surely, to be spoken. Her wrongs

were remembered, and her shrieks numbered, by a POWER far more terrible than man; and a certain doom and deplorable death was pronounced against them, at the moment their joy was fullest.

"The evening passed away, and morning came; and, through a little wicket which looked upon the sea, the light showed me that my chamber was the treasure-room of the pirates, for such they were, as well as smugglers; at the same moment a hole opened above, and a piece of bread and an antique silver cup filled with wine were lowered down. Amid the misery of my situation it seemed but a light evil that I recognised the silver vessel to be part of the treasure I had left at home; and in seeking for a weapon to force the wicket, I found that my whole riches, in gold as well as silver, had been seized and put on board. I could now measure the extent of my calamity, and prepared myself for a fate, which, among such miscreants, could not be deemed far distant. The morning was not much

advanced when the sun dipped at once into a dark and tempestuous ocean of clouds, the wind began to whistle shriller and shriller among our sails, and the sea, upturned by sudden and heavy gusts of wind, showed, as far as the eye could reach, those dark and tremendous furrows so fatal to mariners. The wind was from the land, and I could both see and feel that the vessel was unable to gain the harbour, and had sought security from the approaching tempest by standing out to sea. I heard the wind wax louder, and saw the billows roll, with a joy that arises from the hope of revenge: the sky became darker, the sea flashed over the decks, and the tempest hurried the ship onward with a rapidity which alarmed the sailors, accustomed as they were to the element. The seams of the vessel began to admit the sea, and every where symptoms appeared of her immediate destruction.

" I heard a conversation overhead I shall never forget. ' I tell you,' said a voice in

lowland Scotch, ' good can never come of such evil as your captain and you have wrought; had you taken Miles Colvine's gold and silver alone, the sin had been but little, and a grey-headed repentance might have mended all. But the bonnie lady! her voice has been heard to-day, and tremble all you that touched her sweet body, for here has come an avenging tempest. The sea will soon devour us, and hot hell will hold us; and the mother who bore, and the wife who loved me, and the bonnie babes I have nursed on my knee, will behold me no more; and all for being in company with such hell-hounds as you.'

"A voice replied to all this, in a tone too low and suppressed to be audible; and the Scotchman answered again:—' Lo, look, did ever eyes behold such a sight; all around us the sea is smooth as glass, and other ships pass by us under a gentle breeze, without a wetted sail; but we! the anger of Heaven has found us, for on us the thick tempest beats, and the evil one is pursuing

us to destruction. O thou eternal villain—captain, shall I call thee no more—and you!—you fifteen wretches, who shared with him in his crime, make you ready, for that storm will neither leave you, nor forsake you, till you are buried in the ocean.'

"At the very moment when ruin seemed inevitable, the tempest ceased, the clouds passed away, and the descending sun shone brightly down, making the shoreless waters sparkle as far as the eye could reach. No bounds were now set to the joy of the crew; they crowded the deck, made a circle round several vessels of wine and baskets of biscuit; and before the twilight had passed away, a few only were capable of guiding the vessel. The night grew very dark, and as I sat in utter despair, I heard the same friendly voice, that I had so lately heard, say, 'Miles Colvine, put your trust in Him who can still the tempest; thy time is come.'

"In a moment the wicket opened, and the same voice said, 'Take this sword, and come with me. If you have courage to

avenge the miseries and the death of your beautiful and wretched wife, come, for the hour is at hand, and as sure as I hate sin, and love immortal happiness, I shall help you.'

"I took the sword, followed in silence, and, coming on deck, I beheld a scene which the hope of sure and immediate revenge rendered inexpressibly sweet. The captain and five sailors, though nearly overcome with wine, were seated on deck; the remainder of the crew had retired below; some shouted, some sang, all blasphemed, and one loud din of cursing and carousal echoed far and wide: the mingled clamour that ascended from this scene of wickedness and debauchery, partook of all the evil qualities of debased minds, and the most infamous pursuits, and cannot be described. Discord had its full share in the conference on deck between the captain and his confederates; they were debating about their shares in the plunder of my house.

"'Share! by my saul, man,' said a Scot-

tish sailor to the captain, 'your share in Miles Colvine's pure gold can be but small; one hour of his sweet lady, a hundred leagues from land, was worth all the gold that ever shone.'

"'I shall share all fairly,' said the captain, laying his hand on the hilt of his cutlass; 'and first I shall share thy scoundrel carcase among the fishes of the sea, if I hear such a word again. Did I plan the glorious plot of carrying away the fair lady and her lord's treasure, to share either with such a Scotch sawney as thee?'

"The wrath of the Scotchman burnt on his brow, far redder than the flush of the wine he had drunk. 'Fiend seethe my saul in his chief cauldron, if ye taste na' cauld iron for this!' And out came his cutlass as he spoke.

"'That's my hearty Caledonian,' said one of his comrades, 'give him a touch of the toasting iron; didn't he give a blow on the head to my mother's own son, this blessed morning, for only playing pluck at

the lady's garment. Ah, give him the cold piece of steel, my hearty.'

"A blow from the captain's cutlass was the answer to this; several drunkards drew their swords, and ill-directed blows, and ineffectual stabs, were given and received in the dark. 'Now,' said my sailor, laying his hand on mine, to stay me till I received his admonition, 'say not one word, for words slay not, but glide in among them like a spirit; thrust your blade, for anger strikes, but revenge stabs; and I will secure the gangway, and fight along with you.'

"I heard and obeyed, and gliding among them, thrust one of them through and through; a second, and a third, dropped, ere they saw who was among them. The captain attempted to draw a pistol, but my sword, and my friend's, entered at back and bosom; and though two yet remained unhurt, I struck my sword a second time through the bosom of my mortal enemy, as he lay beneath me; and the last expiring glance of his eye was a look worth remem-

bering. Ere this was accomplished, the other two were both lying with their companions. I have frequently imagined that a firmness and strength, more than my own, were given me during this desperate encounter. Meanwhile the remainder of the crew below set no bounds to their merriment and shouting, and seemed, as my Scottish friend remarked, ordained to die by my hand, since their clamour, by drowning the groans of their comrades, prevented them from providing for their safety. We fastened the cabin door, and barricaded the gangway, keeping watch for many days with pistol and sword, with the hope of seeing some friendly shore, or a compassionate sail; while the vessel, urged onward by a strong wind, scudded with supernatural swiftness through the midnight waters. We had entered the Solway sea, when a storm came on, which, augmenting every moment, carried us rapidly along. When opposite Allanbay, a whirlwind seizing our ship by the rigging, whirled her fairly round, and

dashed her against a sand bank. As the planks sundered, and the waters rushed in, I beheld an armed man, one of the band of wretches from below, rise up before me with a look of fury which a fiend might envy. Our hatred was superior to the tempest and the scene of desolation around, and, drawing our cutlasses, we sought each other's bosom. There is a fate in all things — the planks parted beneath our feet, and the sea broke over us, and he escaped me then, to perish by my hand to-night. Revenge is sweetest when it comes unhoped for. As we sank in the waves, a passing vessel, it seems, saved my sweet May Colvine, while the remainder of the crew went to the bottom, without the chance of swimming for an existence they deserved not to prolong. Such is my story."

Little more is known with certainty of the life of this remarkable man. He forsook his house soon after, and went to another — perhaps his native land. The peasantry and the fishermen, from awe as well as respect to his fortitude and misfor-

tunes, permitted his cottage to remain untouched; and the seamen, as they sailed by, looked with something of a superstitious regard on the residence of Miles Colvine. Many years afterwards — on a summer morning, a peasant went to the sea, to examine his nets and lines. The sun had just risen, and was slanting his first beams over the green hills behind — a few long and narrow lines of dewy light fell across the Solway, and the mountains on the Scottish side were brightened from their summits midway down. He saw a man seated by the door of the Mariner's cottage, dressed in a garb resembling that of a pilgrim, and leaning over a staff. He went closer, and addressed him — no answer was returned — the stranger was cold and dead — his hands were clasped together on the head of his staff, and his eyes were wide open, and looking seaward. Some old men came, and said, "A woeful man was Miles Colvine, the Mariner," and interred him among their ancestors in the parish churchyard.

HONEST MAN JOHN OCHILTREE.

" A gay young lad frae Locherben
Came galloping late to our gate en;
He doft his hat, and came bouncing ben,
Saying, Maiden, I come to wooe.
His brow was brent, his glance was gleg,
A snaw-white skin an' a wanton leg;
A gallant young lad, quo' I, by my feg,
He's welcome here to wooe.

" Aboon the fire upon the bink,
He had bread to eat an' wine to drink,
But ne'er a blithe styme wad he blink
Till he was warm and fou;
Syne by the hand I have him ta'en,
Ye coldrife lover now get ye gane,
I'd liefer lie a year my lane
Than lie an hour wi' you."

Old Scottish Song.

I WAS not always an old man, with a lank leg and a grey head; there was a time before I began the pleasant trade of cheering the dames and maidens with my merry tales. I was then young, my leg was firm and shapely, my locks were bushy and

black; and I could have pitched the bar, or played a fiddle, with the youth of seven parishes. But a sad cough, which I caught among the damp broom on Quarrelwood Hill hearkening a sectarian sermon, plucked strength and spirit down, and drove me to win the bread by my wit, which more favoured men purchase by the sweat of their brow. But the world is an altered world to me since I commenced my calling; it is a white half-crown, a week the worse for the wear; people are grown too wise to be delighted — they laugh not at my wittiest story, nor shed one tear at my saddest. I have seen when ye might have tied seven strong men with a straw, as they shouted and laughed, and lay down and laughed at my narratives; a smile is as hard to earn as a sixpence now, and tears are dried up on the earth. My saddest story would bring red wine out of a rock, or strong drink from a log of Memel fir, sooner than extract one tear from the brightest eye of the present generation.

But I scatter none of those antique pearls —those tender and touching narratives, before the eyes of the self-sufficient husbandman and the critical mechanic. I steep not my story now in the dark and fathomless stream of superstition: I have seen the time when tales and ballads of fairies and elves, and witches and warlocks, and elve candles and water spunkies, and wraiths and ghosts, and goblins and foul fiends, horned or cloven-footed, would have been to one as food and raiment and white money. But the wisdom of man so much abounds, that he is pleased with nought; he laughs at ancient beliefs, and calls for ocular proof, and testimony on oath, and the assurance of many witnesses, for all oral or recorded things. The poetry has departed from story-telling, conjured away by the wand of that sorcerer, education. Not that I mean to aver that all else is as husks and bran, compared to the white and the purified grain. I have had curious adventures of my own, in which the most

querulous matter-of-fact man could detect neither superstition nor poetry. These, falling from the lips of one blessed with a natural grace of utterance, might go far to move men to mirth: but I can hope for no such consummation.

The old man adjusted his mantle, stood perpendicularly up, and, combing his white locks with his fingers, commenced his narrative with something of a look and tone at once grave and shrewd.

The adventures I shall relate commenced with my seventeenth year: I had learned to sing, and also to dance; but nature, which lavishes so many notable gifts, denied me that ready and familiar grace of address which wins its way to woman's regard: I conversed with the maids, whom the music of the fiddle surrendered to my company, with such manifest confusion, and even alarm, that they soon reckoned me a creature equally uncouth and ungracious; and I was subjected to abundance of scorn, and caprice, and wit, when I endeavoured

at gallantry. When I led them to the floor, they would examine me from head to foot, with an eye sparkling in malicious wit; and even their grandmothers regarded me with a glance of the most mortifying compassion. It was sometimes a matter of rivalry among the girls to obtain my hand: to dance with such a cutter of uncouth capers, such a marvellous piece of human imperfection as me, was made a matter of boast and a subject for laughter; and any expressions of respect or love which I hazarded were parodied and distorted into all that was absurd and ridiculous by these capricious spirits. They all seemed to possess, for my mortification and sorrow, a talent for humour and ridicule, which broke out on every occasion. I became the most exalted personage in the parish, if my merit might be estimated by the notice I received; and to this "bad eminence" I was raised by the wit, and the fun, and folly of women.

To one of those meetings at the conclu-

sion of harvest, which, taking farewell of autumn, welcome the winter with drinking and dancing, and all sorts of rustic festivity, I was about this time invited. I dressed myself out for the occasion in my newest dress, and in the vanity of my heart I counted myself captivating. My aunt assisted me much in this; she possessed an antique taste, and so far back did her intelligence in apparel reach, that she sought to revive, and that on my person, the motley dress of the minstrels at the ancient border tournaments. One mistake was, that I had no turn for poetry, so I was soon doomed to endure the malice of verse without the power of inflicting it on others; and another was, that I had nothing of a romantic turn about me, so that the dress sat on me with an evil grace. To the dance, however, I went, waving my right arm gallantly as I marched along, and looking oftentimes back at my shadow in the moonlight; the luminary I could not help thinking neglected to do justice to my form,

but that planet is certainly the most capricious of all the lesser lights. I was received with a general stare; and then with a burst of universal and spontaneous mirth. The old men surveyed me with looks in which compassion struggled with curiosity; but the maidens gathered about me, commended the head that imagined my dress, and the hand that fashioned it: the young men joined in this praise with a gravity which I mistook for envy, and the roof rocked and rang to another peal of laughter.

The fiddler, wholly blind, and seated apart from this scene of merriment and mortification, seemed incensed to think that any one should be the cause of mirth but himself. He stayed his hand, laid down his instrument, and while he rosined his bow, inquired what all this laughter meant. "Thy curiosity shall be gratified," said a wicked young girl; and taking my unreluctant hand, she led me up to this producer of sounds, and guided his hand to my person. He felt my dress from head to

heel, vowed by his bow he had never touched a garment of such rich device as my coat, swore by his fiddle my bonnet was worth all the money his instrument had ever earned, and hoped I would leave the land before I ruined the mystery of thairms, for there was no need of instrumental mirth where I came. And dismissing me with a suppressed laugh, for open merriment might have diminished his evening's gain, he recommenced his music, and the discontinued dance began.

My torment now commenced: the lasses danced round me in a ring. I had the misfortune to be so much in request that I was never off the floor; though I danced six and thirty reels without let or pause; and though the drops fell from my brows like rain: I saw no end to such perpetual capering. This ridiculous exertion is still remembered among the dames of Annandale; and I lately heard a girl reproach her lover with his listlessness for mirth, saying, "When will ye dance six and thirty reels

like daft John Ochiltree?" I grew an inch taller with this proof of my fame. All this was to come to an end. The blind fiddler had been smit in his youth with the disease of tune-making: he had mingled the notes of half a dozen tunes together, from which he extracted a kind of musical square root, and this singular progeny he was desirous of baptizing; much it seems depends on having a fine sounding name. At present, he was hesitating between "Prince Charles's Delight," or "Duke William's Welcome," when a peasant demanded the tune; "the new tune, plague on't, the tune without a name." "A tune without a name," said a girl, "cannot ye christen it, man? here, fiddler, play up Honest Man John Ochiltree." A shout of laughter succeeded: "A name, by my faith," exclaimed many voices at once; and the new name was shouted by a hundred tongues, to the infinite mortification of the fiddler and me: our vanity was wounded. The name of the tune was fixed as unalterably as the laws of the Medes,

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and from that hour forward it haunted me through life; while the popularity of the air was increased by the noises which a rustic minstrel soon caused to jingle in rude chorus to the air. Thus I got the name of "Honest Man John Ochiltree," and the story was a winter's laugh to the parish.

But there is no sour without its sweet: all this had been witnessed by a farmer's daughter, whom the pursuit of many lovers had not rendered capricious, and who thought she perceived in the patience with which I endured all this musical persecution the materials for making a quiet and tractable husband. She trod on my foot returning from a hill-preaching, and apologized with so much grace, that I thought her the fairest maiden of the whole valley; and after touching on the sermon, and quoting the Song of Solomon, we parted with a mutual promise of meeting in her father's barn at midnight. I was punctual to my tryste, and so accurate was the devout maiden, that the clock struck twelve as she

turned the key in the granary door. She opened a little wicket, and let in the summer moonlight; and seating ourselves on two inverted bushels, we sat in collateral splendour, side by side, amid the silent light of the luminary.

I looked at the maiden, who kept looking on the opposite wall with an aspect of demure but arch composure, and seemed to count the stones of which it was built. Had I been afflicted with the cureless evil of verse making, I had now a matchless opportunity of displaying my gift. The silence of the place, — the glow of the moon, — the beauty of the maiden, Mary Anderson by name,—her white hands clasped over a whiter bosom, her locks a glistering and a golden brown, escaping from the comb, descending in ringlets down her left cheek and shoulder, and taking a silvery or a golden hue as they moved to her breath amid the pure moonlight! This was my first attempt at courtship. I trembled much, and the words of love, too, trembled

on my tongue. Let no man sit many minutes silent in the presence of his mistress: he will be forgiven for folly, for more serious offences, but never for silence. Had I made my débût in darkness, I think I should have spoken, and spoken, too, with much tenderness and true love. But the fault lay with the moon, plague on the capricious planet! I never see her fickle light glimmering through the chink of a barn wall, but I think on the time when I lost my first love through her influence. We sat mute for the space of a quarter of an hour; and I had nearly vanquished my aversion to the moon's presence, when an owl rested from her flight on the roof above us for a moment, and just as the words had assembled on my lips, uttered a long and melancholy "whoop hoo." I wished not to pitch the tone of courtship by a sound so ominous, and remained mute. I mustered my resolution again, and the first word (I would give the world to remember what word it was) was actually escaping from my

lips, when a sucking calf lowed, perhaps for its dam, in a stall near us, and the voices of the four and the two footed animals were blended so curiously in utterance, that a judge of natural music would have found difficulty in awarding to each their own proper notes. This was a sound much more mischievous than the voice of the owl: the maiden, devout as she was, could not suppress a smile, and rising said, "I think we know enough of one another's minds for one night," and vanished from my side; so I closed my first night's wooing. I once had the courage to propose to her the endurance of another vigil; she set her hands to her mouth, and "whooted out whoots three:" we never met again.

But I was an inextinguishable lover. I disciplined my mind, pampered up my courage, and having, as I hoped, inured myself to the sharp encounter of female wit, boldly resolved to go in quest of an adventure. I have travelled much in the world; but all parts of the earth are surpassed by Scotland

in the amorous spirit of its peasantry: there a maiden has many lovers, and a peasant many mistresses: adventures equalling those of romance are encountered; and the effusion of men's blood, as well as maiden's tears, not unfrequently follows those nocturnal excursions. I walked resolutely abroad, and hoped the achievement of some notable adventure. For some time I was without success; but at last a long stream of light from a farmer's window led me up to the casement, within which I observed his eldest daughter, a gay damsel of eighteen, couched on the watch, and waiting the approach of some happy wooer. She opened the window when I appeared, but seeing a form she had not hoped for, stood holding the sash in her hand, pondering whether she should take the earliest blessing which heaven had sent in human shape.

At this moment her expected lover appeared, a spruce youth from the neighbouring city, pruned and landered, and scenting the way with musk and frankincense. The

maiden wrung her hands with vexation: her wit could not deal with more than one at a time; and as I was never of a quarrelsome nature, and had an aversion to intrude upon true love, I turned suddenly to retreat. The young man started off too; and as my road lay the very way he ran, he imagined I pursued him with some sinister intention, so he augmented his speed; I still gained on him; a lake was in the way: I have ever had an affection for running water since it received my rival in its bosom, plump over head and ears, with a dash that startled the wild ducks for a mile round. He swam through like an evil spirit, while I returned to his mistress, and found her holding the casement open, perhaps for the successful lover; so I leaped gaily into the chamber, and, seated by the maiden's side, began to hope I was conquering my fate.

The night, gloomy before, became tenfold darker now; the wind, accompanied by heavy gushes of rain, shook window and door, and raised in the chimney-top

that long and melancholy whine which so many of the peasants reckon ominous. The night waxed wilder and wilder; and, to augment the tempest, the fires flashed and the thunder roared in such rapid succession, that the walls of the chamber appeared in continual flame, and the furniture shook and clattered. Now I have heard of lovers who considered a stormy tryste night as a kind gift of fortune, and who could enlist the tempest which "roared and rustled" around them, into the service of love, and compel it to make a pathetic supplication in their behalf to an unmerciful mistress. I never liked these cloudy influences, and instead of making a vassal of elemental commotion, it always made a servant of me; a high wind and a storm, accompanied by thunder and fire, made me quiver and quake. I gave ample proof on this unfortunate night of my submission to the genius of the blast: the maid laid her white arm round my neck, and when she was soothing my terrors with soft words,

the door of the chamber opened, and in glided her mother, saying, " Lassie, are ye waking?" To find a lover in her daughter's chamber was, perhaps, neither uncommon nor unexpected; but to find a new face, to find me, " Honest Man John Ochiltree," whose name was doomed to descend to posterity at the top of a ridiculous reel tune, the disclosure was to be dreaded; so the subtle maiden, unloosing a comb from a thick fleece of long auburn hair, threw such a profusion of ringlets over my face, as nearly suffocated me; waving her hand at the same time for her mother to retire.

The prudent mother, however, advanced, saying, " Bless me, lassie, this is a fearful night to have love-trystes and wooester-daffin in. I have trysted on mony a queer night myself, but on none that equalled this; yet I think nae the waur of the lad who keeps his faith on a night that makes the wide world tremble." The daughter still waved her hand, but the dame was

not to be daunted; and thus she persisted: "But Jenny, my bonny bairn, when will ye put an end to these dallyings; no that I would have ye to make your election rashly, in the calf-love, as the rude proverb says, for ye're young and no at the end of your teens till the bud be on the bush; but when will ye quit these dallyings, I say, and single out a discreet husband and a devout? Ye have rich lovers, more than one or two, yet set not thy heart on the siller, lass, though I would hardly counsel ye to wed without it. A loving lad in lily white linen looks weel enough in a fule sang, but give me the lad with bills and bonds, and good set siller, who can fill and fetch mair. Yet make not gowd a god in the choice of thy heart; though to give ye mair for a bridal-tocher than three hundred pounds, and put ye into a fu' farm, is what I wadnae counsel thy father to do." The daughter still waved her mother to be gone; but the covering of my face excited the good dame's suspicions,

and she resolved to see me face to face, though it might diminish the amount of Jenny's admirers.

No resolution was ever carried more quickly into execution. "But Jenny, woman, what ails the lad that he hides his face? if he has nae a face worth looking at, he's no a lad for thee. And I ken not a lad in the parish who might wish to hide his head, except that daft chield, Jock Ochiltree, — Jock Gomeral would suit him better: his grand-dame was burnt for a witch at the West-bow port of Edinburgh; and if the grandson was burnt for a fool, there would be no waste of fuel on the family." And removing a handful of her daughter's hair as she spoke, she saw me, and shouted, till her voice fairly exceeded the tempest that still raged without: "Nay, but the Lord preserve me! his presence be near! here's that gaping goose, Jock Gowk himself; for my lips I wadnae defile with his name, much less my arms with his person. Oh, to think

that ever thy mother's daughter thought of lending credit to such a race, or bearing a bonnie bairntime to a born gomeral. Out of my house, I say, out of my house; start, else I shall write the notes of thy ain tune on thy face, seven crotchets to the bar."

"O mother," said the submissive daughter, "turn not the poor lad out on such a night as this: the thunder and fire, the flash and the din, will kill him; for he shakes at every clap like the leaf o' the linn."

"Na, worse than all," shouted the dame, in a tone where scorn was blended with anger; "na, worse than all: to be but a fool is no such a failing; there's Captain what's his name? whose whole wit lies in feeding capons, and who is hardly fit for watching the worms from the kale, yet he's made a justice o' the peace: but what can one do with a coward? I'm wasting words; I'm whistling a reel tune to a mile-stone: out of my house, I say; I will not defile both window and door

with thee, so leap and vanish." And holding up the casement, I leaped gladly out, happy at escaping from the wicked wagging of her tongue into the more endurable evil of wind, and rain, and fire.

This unlucky repulse, with many a mischievous embellishment, flew over the parish; but I was not to be daunted. On the third evening after this mixed adventure of good and evil, I made an excursion beyond the limits of my parish; and entered upon the wild moorlands, where the dwellings are few and far between. A young man finds ready access among marriageable maidens; so I soon found myself seated at a sheep farmer's fire, in company of the good man's only daughter, a maid both ripe and rosy, with her father and mother, and some fifteen sheep dogs, as auditors of our conversation. At first, our talk was of that kind which newspapers call desultory; the weather, with all its variations; the fruits in their season; and the cattle after their kind; and contracting

the circle of our scrutiny as we proceeded, we at last settled upon the cares of a pasture farm. We talked of sheep after their sorts, the Cheviot breed, the auld stock of Tinwald, the lang sheep and the short mug ewes, gimmers, crocks, and dinmans; nor did we fail to discuss the diseases which preyed on this patriarchal wealth; mawks and moorill, rot and leaping-illness; and so extensive was my knowledge in all this, and also on the more mysterious mischief of evil e'en, elf-arrows, and witchcraft, that the old dame grew astonished, and whispered to her husband: "This lad's words are worth drops of gold; speak him cannilie, Sandie, speak him cannilie." Her daughter, too, had her own thoughts: she appeared to employ herself with the intricacies of a skein of thread; but contrived at every motion of her hand, to steal a glance at me from beneath a thick mass of natural curls which rivalled in density, and nearly in colour, the fairest fleece of any of her father's flock. Her

hand, too, unwittingly paused in its work, and shed back the curls from her ears that she might hear more accurately my ideas of fire-side economy and joy. The old man alone seemed slow in entering into the prospect of wedding his daughter's visible wealth, to one whose chief substance was speculative. He sat solacing his thoughts with a scheme which had no connexion with my happiness. I saw something sinister in his looks; I heard him utter many a dry and dubious cough as his wife urged his admission of me as a suitor; and perceived, like the half hope of bliss held out by the Puritans, that I might be elected, but should never be chosen.

At this moment the latch of the door was lifted, and a human figure tottered in, leaning twofold over a staff polished like glass with long use. It was a neighbouring moorland farmer, and a suitor to the maiden. He was dressed, or rather encumbered with clothes, which in the

shape of two coats, a large one and a less, showed the antique skill of cloth-cutting at the time of the Scottish persecution. Over all these a large plaid extended, and a bonnet that nearly overshaded the plaid, crowned the whole. He removed this last mentioned article, and displayed a face as sharp and biting as a northern frost, and a couple of small, keen, and inquisitive grey eyes, which seemed only acquainted with arithmetical calculation. He smoothed back his locks, which seemed to have long rebelled against the comb, and casting his eyes over us, said with a prefatory cough;

" Hale be thy heart, goodman, and happy be thine, goodwife, and merry may thine be, Penney, my winsome quean, mair by token I have sold seven score of dinmans, every cloot, and all to buy thee a bridal garment, lass, and a horse to ride on to the kirking; the fellow of whilk ye'll no find from Annan to Nith. But who, in the name of all that's holy, can

this strange tyke be?" said this venerable gallant, casting a look of no great delight on me; "his dress would scare the sheep, so he can be no shepherd; and he seems to lack wit to watch the hooded crows from his flock, so he cannot be wealthy;" and with this unceremonious notice of me, he drew in a chair by the side of the maiden, and stroked down her innumerable curls with his hand, which smelled of tar equal to the suffocation of any town damsel. She smiled, for the smell was frankincense to her; the ancient suitor smiled also, — a smile, rivalling that of a death's head on a grave-stone, and said, "Well may ye laugh, lassie; that's the right hand that lays on the tar with mair skill than the proudest man in Tiviotdale, and has more flocks to lay tar on, lassie, — seventy score of brood ewes; but why need I brag? a man may ride a summer-day on my farm and no get far over the boundary."

I sat confounded at this display of opulence, which I saw had a strong influence

on the maiden's heart; while her father, drawing near her, whispered, "Take him, Penney, take him—he's a rich man and well arrayed—he has two tap-coats and a plaid on."

The shepherd maiden looked on this antiquated suitor, and she looked on me; but the glow which unrequited love spread over a face of eighteen barely balanced the matter against territorial wealth and its grey-bearded owner. I had no resource save in youth and health; but my adversary came armed in the charms and might of property, and my more modern looks made but a poor battle against the appeal which riches made to maiden vanity. "Foolish lassie," said my rival, in a tone which sounded like the first shovel-full of churchyard earth thrown on the lid of a coffin,—"Foolish lassie, why makest thou thy bright een glance from side to side on this stripling and me, as if thou would'st weigh us in a balance? Who is this raw youth, thinkest thou? The owner of his own proper person,

the laird of no-town-brae, as the proverb says, and lord of windy-wa's, as singeth the auld sang. He may wooe you with fine words, but will he drop a bonnet piece of beaten gold in thy lap for every sigh he gives? he may please thee with his face, and, bating that he looks like a fool, his looks are well enough; but can he cast cantraips over ye as I can do? can he scatter golden spells and paper charms in thy lap, and make ye lady of as mickle land as a hooded crow will fly over when he seeks to prey on the earliest lamb of spring?"

And as the old man spoke, he produced from the nook-pouch of his plaid a kind of wallet of rough calf-skin, secured with many a strap and string, which he unloosed with a kind of prolonged delight, and then diving into the bosom of this mouldy sanctuary of Mammon, fished up the remains of an old stocking. "Haud thy lap, Penney, my woman," said the owner; and he emptied with a clang into the

maiden's lap upwards of an hundred antique pieces of Scottish gold, which avarice had arrested in their circulation before the accession of the house of Stuart. "There's as mickle as will array thee for the bridal, and here's documents for property which I will give thee the moment the kirk buckles us." An old piece of leather, which the diligence of the owner had fashioned from a saddle-lap into a pocket-book, supplied him with sundry papers, which he described as he submitted them to her examination. "That's a haud-fast bond on the lands of the laird of Sloken-drouth for seven hundred pounds Scots, a' sure siller; that's the rights of the lands of Knockhoolie, thirty-five pounds yearly, and ye'll be called the dame of Knockhoolie, a bonnie title and weel sounding."

But why should I prolong a story of which all who hearken must know the upshot? I saw the wicked speed that Mammon made in the maiden's affections, and sat dumbfounded and despairing. Her

look, which was one of grave consideration at first, gradually brightened and expanded; she looked at the riches and she looked at him, and said, "But I'm to have the cheese-siller, and the siller for the udder-locks; a riding habit, brown or blue, or one of both; a grey horse and a side saddle. I am to gang to the two fairs of Dumfries, the St. James's fair of Lanark, to the Cameronian sacrament, and to have a dance twice a year—once at Beltane, and once at Hallowmass."

"All shall be as thou sayest, Penney, my princess," said her lover, interrupting, probably, a long list of expected luxuries; "so name the bridal-day."

My vexation now exceeded all bounds of decorum, and I spoke: "I would counsel ye to name the day soon, for the bridegroom has not an hour to lose; the bridal cups will barely be dry before they're lacked for his lyke wake; he has little time to spare."

The bride, as I may safely call her, laughed till her eyes were wet, and said,

"Well spoken, young man, that's the most sensible thing ye have said this blessed night; and so, as there is no time to be lost, ye say, let us be married on Saturday; let the fault fall on the lag end of the week." For this mention of early joy the bridegroom endeavoured to inflict the penance of a kiss on the lips which uttered it. — "Haud off," said the damsel, "filthy body, ye stink of tar; bide off till the blessing's said, till the meat be consecrated; go home, and nurse your breath, for it's wondrous feeble."

I now rose to depart; the bride conducted me to the door, and endeavoured to console me in a departing whisper: "This is Monday, — I'm to be wed on Saturday, — let me see, — my father and mother will be frae hame on Thursday, so come owre here in the braw moonlight, and let us have an hour's running round the haystacks, and daffin in the darksome nooks. Auld Worldsworm, — Auld Simon Setsiller, — him there with the twa tap coats and the plaid on, wha has not as much breath as would bless

his breakfast, he'll ne'er be the wiser on't: what he disnae ken will give him no manner of trouble." We parted, but we met no more.

After this unsuccessful inroad on the moorlands, I resolved to push my fortune no farther, without some more sensible assurance of success. I was, therefore, on the look out for the young and the handsome: I frequented fairs with the fidelity of a horse dealer; attended all the merry-makings round, with the punctuality of a fiddler; and went devoutly to the kirk, with the regularity of an ancient maiden whose thoughts had been weaned, by the counsel of aching bones and the eloquence of wrinkles, from free love to religion. But I was doomed to every species of mortification and repulse, and had actually in despair procured a copy of the register of maidens' baptisms in the parish, with the serious resolution of courting them regularly forward, according to their seniority of

claim, when the wheel of fortune turned up one of her brightest spokes.

As I sat pondering on my luckless lot, a slender fair-haired girl of fourteen, the daughter of a respectable and opulent farmer, came gliding like a sylph to my side, and, with a manner conscious and sly, said, that her father and her mother were gone to a bridal, and that her elder sister, Bess, desired my company to curds and cream, and to help her to while away the fore-night. Now her sister was one of the merriest and rosiest girls in the district; had a dancing foot and a fine ankle, and a voice which lent a grace to old songs which the best of your theatrical quaverers fail to impart. I need not say that her invitation charmed me: I lavished ribands, as well as thanks, on the bearer of this pleasing news, and passed my hand over her long and curling hair, saying, "An' thou be spared, some lad will sigh at his supper for thee yet." She set out a fair chin and a white bosom

to the motion of my hand, and seemed perfectly aware, though young now, that she would be older in summer. She tripped to the door, and looking back with an archness of manner, and a roguish glance of her eye, said, "Ye might have done waur than given me a kiss to carry to my sister, and ane to myself for carrying it;" and uttering a loud laugh as she saw me rise to follow, away she bounded as light and graceful as a woodland fairy. An old beggar woman looked after her as she fled, and shook her crutch at her: "Ah, thou young wanton, I heard thy words: they who learn young learn fair, and it's worse to keep the kitten frae the kirn than the auld cat; but see what it all comes to; a lamiter's crutch and an awmous-powk: nought will be a warning!" and the old woman groaned bitterly as she halted along at the memory of merrier days.

I was true to tryste, and turned my steps to the farmer's residence a little after twilight; the windows were gleaming with

light, and the din of merriment resounded far and wide. My fairy messenger met me at the door, and standing on tiptoe, whispered in my ear, "Come away, ye have been lang looked for: there's naebody here but Jock Gordon of Goosedub, Rab Robson of Rowantree-burn, and Davie Wilson of Ballacraig; ye ken all the rest except the young laird of Moorbirn and his cousin, whom men call Daunering John." I entered, and found my knowledge was much more limited than the girl imagined; the farmer's hall was filled with strange faces, for three parishes round had each sent its contribution of youthful flesh and blood.

Ten came east, and ten came west,
And ten came rowing o'er the water;
Twa came down the long dike side,
There's twa and thirty wooing at her.

But if the heroine of Tintock-top rivalled bonnie Bess in the amount of her wooers, I question if she excelled her in the native tact and good management with which she

kept in subordination so many fiery and intractable dispositions. We were all seated round a large table, at the head of which the maiden herself presided, distributing her glances among her admirers with an equal and a judicious diligence. Curds and cream, and tea, were in succession handed round; she partook of both, uniting in her own person the pastoral taste of the mountains with the refinement of the vales: songs were sung; she assisted in the strain, and her voice was sweet and delightful; and thus the evening hours flew by. But amid all this show of harmony and good fellowship, an experienced eye might observe, by the clouding brow and restrained joy of many, that the breeze of love which blew so soft and so balmy would soon burst out into tempest and storm. It is certainly a hazardous policy in such matters to collect a number of admirers face to face: in the silent darkness of a solitary tryste, the lover imagines himself the sole, or at least, the favoured admirer; and after breathing a

brief vow, and tasting the joy of a half yielded kiss, he returns home, leaving his mistress to the nocturnal hardihood and superior address of a more artful lover. But seated with your rivals at your side, your jealousy of affection rises in arms against your peace, and you begin to sum up the hours you have been blessed in her company, and to multiply them by the number of her admirers, conceding in despair a fractional part of affection to yourself, while it is plain your rivals have revelled in round numbers. There is no temper can long endure this; and it seemed plain that my fellow suitors regarded our meeting as a general field-day, — a numbering of the people, that she might wonder over the amount of her admirers and the force of her own charms.

Conversation began at last to flag, and silence ensued. "For my own part," said an upland shepherd, "I came here for an hour of quiet joy in a dark nook, the darker the better; but here's nought but an assem-

bly of fools from the four winds of heaven, bending their darkening brows at one another, and a young lass sitting to count the strokes they strike, and to reckon every bruised brow a sure sign of her influence among men. Deil have me if I like it; so let short peace and long strife be among ye; and for you, my bonnie dame, the less ye make sport of honest hearts, the less sport will evil hearts make of you, and so I leave you:" and away he strode, whistling manfully the tune of the gallant Graemes, in token of defiance. "Let him go, the rough-footed moorcock, that can clap his wings, but never crow," said a ploughman from the vale of Ae; "the smell of tar and tainted mutton is diminished since his departure." This was touching on a perilous theme, — the old feud which exists between the pastoral and agricultural districts. "I would advise ye lads," said a youth of moorland descent, "to eat well of wether mutton and moorcocks afore ye speak lightly of aught that's bred among mosses; ye may

need all your strength to maintain unguarded words. Lord, if my cousin of Blackhagg were here, he would make ye eat your own words, though every one were as ill to swallow as a pound of hiplock wool." The incensed tiller of the holms of Ae started to his feet, his utterance nearly choked with rage: "Rise, ye moorland coof, ye two-footed tender of four-footed brutes, lacking as much in sense as ye lack in number of limbs; rise this precious moment, else I'll give ye the blow where ye sit." The man of the moors was not slow in attempting to rise; the brawny arm of a brother shepherd, which clutched his gorget with a grasp equal to the tethering of a bull, alone retarded his rising. "Let him alone, I say, Sandie; just let him alone," said the shepherd; "be civil at a douce man's hearth before his weelfaured daughter: ye ken the auld say; Be the saint in the hall, and the devil on the greensward; meaning, nae doubt, that we should carry our mischief out of doors: I'll stretch him as straight as one of his own

furrows before an hour blow by, and on the same place too, the lily lea." The wrath of the husbandman was turned on this doughty auxiliary, and having a divided aim, it burnt fiercely between them, without harming either. Meantime, other tongues took part in the commotion: parochial nick-names, and family failings, and personal defects, were bandied from side to side, with all the keenness of rustic wit, and the malice of rivalry; while, on the whole, the maiden sat and looked as one would on a fire burning too fiercely to be quenched.

It was not my wish to distinguish myself in this strife of tongues, and therefore I sat still, maintaining an expression of face which I hoped would carry me quietly through this stormy tide of contention. I was only deceiving myself.

"And ye'll sit mute and motionless there, and hear the bonnie green hills of Annandale turned, by the malice of man's wit, into moudie-tammocks," said a shepherd to me; "Up and speak, for I have

spoken till I'm as hoarse as a raven; or rise and fight; if ye have not a tongue in your head, ye may have a soul in your body."

All turned their eyes on me at this address, and the uproar subsided for a time to hear my answer to this singular appeal.

"A soul in his body," shouted a rustic, in a tone which implied something like a suspicion of my right to the spark immortal, "Have ye not heard the scoffing sang that's ringing from side to side of the country? I wonder the subject of such verses presumed to show his face among sponsible folk."

And to my utter shame and confusion of face, he proceeded to chant the folfollowing rude verse, looking all the while on me with an eye sparkling with scorn and derision:

O have ye not heard of John Ochiltree?
That dainty chield John Ochiltree?
The owl has a voice, and the cat an ee,
And so has sonsie John Ochiltree.

An ancient woman wonn'd in Colean,
She had never a tooth 'tween her lips but ane,
She mumbled her meat with a horn spoon,
Yet she fell in love with a bonnie new tune;
She bobb'd on her crutches so frank and so free,
To the dainty tune of John Ochiltree.

As the verse ended, a laugh burst out which made the roof shake over our heads, to show how fickle men's passions are, and the mortification I was doomed to endure. To be the subject of ludicrous rhymes is to have an infection about one equal to the plague. My fellow suitors shunned me, and the capricious maiden herself assumed an air so haughty and decided that I saw my cause was cureless. All this was witnessed by one who sympathized in my sufferings, and whose ready wit suggested an instant remedy. The milkiness of my nature had already given way to the accumulating reproach; I had started to my feet, and taken one stride towards my rhyming persecutor with a clenched fist, and a face burning in anger, when the young girl who

brought me the invitation to this unlucky tryste, uttered a scream, and holding up her hand, laid her ear to the floor like one listening intensely. We all stood mute and motionless: she darted to the door with the rapidity of light, returned in a moment half-breathless, and exclaimed in a voice of seeming despair, "Oh! Bess, Bess, what will become of ye? here's Hazel-bank; here's our ain father coming up the road. If he sees what I see, he'll burn Solway, be it for him or against him."

Like a brood of chickens when the hawk descends, so started, so fluttered, and so flew in all directions this meeting of rivals; the door seemed far too narrow for escape. Seven bounded over the stack-yard dike, and three leaped over a quickset hedge six feet high; two ran down the middle of a corn-field, with half the dogs of the place pursuing them; and two, who were strangers, in the haste of escape, fairly leaped into a pond, or small lake, and made good their retreat by swimming to the opposite side.

In one minute the clamorous hall of Hazelbank was as mute as a kirk at midnight. As I hastened to retreat with the others, a white hand twitched me cunningly by the sleeve, and pulled me aside into a little closet, where two very warm and ripe lips whispered close in my ear, "Let the gowks flee, they know not the goose's quack from the eagle's cry; my father's far from home:" — and shutting the chamber-door as she spoke, my bonnie and discreet messenger added: — "My sister Bess is in her grand moods this night; she carries her head o'er high, and winna speak to ye, for the foolery of that silly sang. A pretty thing, to lose a weelfaured lad for the sake of an idle rhyme: sae bide with me; I am almost as tall as Bess is; and I'll be fifteen at midsummer."

"And now," said this representative of the rustic name of Ochiltree, "I shall stay my narrative; feeling something of the distress of a traveller who comes to the shedlands of sundry roads, and knows not which

one to elect; for the adventures which befell me were manifold, and seem in my sight all alike curious and important. But I cannot expect douce greyheaded folk will listen to the idle tales of youthful times. I might have made far more imposing stories of my misadventures among the maidens; for they are not unsusceptible of poetical embellishment; but I despise fictions, and laugh at 'the idly feigned poetic pains' of metre ballad makers; I abide by the old proverb, 'truth tells aye best.'"

"Truth tells aye best indeed," re-echoed an ancient dame, as she sat by the hall fire, "and yet, idle fictions, and the embellishments, — I think that's the word ye used, — of a poetic fancy, seem to flow off as glibly as the current of truth itself. Ah! thou auld-farrand ane, dost thou think to pass off the pleasant inventions of thy own fertile brain for the well-known tales of thy early courtship? Ah, my lad,"— and she eyed him with a look where

humour and seriousness seemed striving for mastery, — "ye are kenned where ye least hope it; far kenned and noted is thy name, as the rhyme-maker said of Satan. And so ye say, you are John Ochiltree, and suffered in your youth from maiden's scorn and minstrel's sang? A bonnie tale, indeed! D'ye think I don't know the merry goodman of Dootagen, Simon Rodan by name, whom I have known since he was the height of a pint-stoup. More by token, he plundered my plum-trees when he was a boy, and climbed in at my chamber windows afore the beard was on his chin, and all to woo three of my servant maidens, and my own cousin, bonnie Jeanie Carruthers. — Scorned by the lasses, indeed! Mickle scorn have they endured for thee. Ah! thou flatterer, and bonnie tale teller. Many a good advice hast thou received from the parish minister and elders, in full session assembled. A lad, the like of Simon Rodan, with all the failings he had, was not to be seen in

seven hours' riding. — A straighter, or a more taper leg never set its foot in a black leather shoe; and it's not much the worse o' the wear yet."

ELPHIN IRVING,

THE FAIRIES' CUPBEARER.

"The lady kilted her kirtle green,
A little aboon her knee,
The lady snooded her yellow hair
A little aboon her bree,
And she's gane to the good green wood
As fast as she could hie.

"And first she let the black steed pass,
And syne she let the brown,
And then she flew to the milk-white steed,
And pull'd the rider down:
Syne out then sang the queen o' the fairies,
Frae 'midst a bank of broom,
She that has won him, young Tamlane,
Has gotten a gallant groom."

Old Ballad.

THE romantic vale of Corriewater, in Annandale, is regarded by the inhabitants, a pastoral and unmingled people, as the last border refuge of those beautiful and capricious beings the fairies. Many old people, yet living, imagine they have had intercourse of good words and good deeds

with the "good folk;" and continue to tell, that in the ancient of days the fairies danced on the hill, and revelled in the glen, and showed themselves, like the mysterious children of the deity of old, among the sons and daughters of men. Their visits to the earth were periods of joy and mirth to mankind, rather than of sorrow and apprehension. They played on musical instruments of wonderful sweetness and variety of note, spread unexpected feasts, the supernatural flavour of which overpowered on many occasions the religious scruples of the Presbyterian shepherds, performed wonderful deeds of horsemanship, and marched in midnight processions, when the sound of their elfin minstrelsy charmed youths and maidens into love for their persons and pursuits; and more than one family of Corriewater have the fame of augmenting the numbers of the elfin chivalry. Faces of friends and relatives, long since doomed to the battle-trench, or the deep sea, have been recog-

nised by those who dared to gaze on the fairy march. The maid has seen her lost lover, and the mother her stolen child; and the courage to plan and achieve their deliverance has been possessed by, at least, one border maiden. In the legends of the people of Corrievale there is a singular mixture of elfin and human adventure, and the traditional story of the Cupbearer to the Queen of the Fairies appeals alike to our domestic feelings and imagination.

In one of the little green loops, or bends, on the banks of Corriewater, mouldered walls, and a few stunted wild plum-trees, and vagrant roses, still point out the site of a cottage and garden. A well of pure spring-water leaps out from an old tree-root before the door; and here the shepherds, shading themselves in summer from the influence of the sun, tell to their children the wild tale of Elphin Irving, and his sister Phemie; and, singular as the story seems, it has gained full credence among the people where the scene is laid.

" I ken the tale and the place weel," interrupted an old Scottish woman, who, from the predominance of scarlet in her apparel, seemed to have been a follower of the camp, " I ken them weel, and the tale's as true as a bullet to its aim, and a spark to powder. Oh, bonnie Corriewater, a thousand times have I pulled gowans on its banks wi' ane that lies stiff and stark on a foreign shore in a bloody grave :" and sobbing audibly, she drew the remains of a military cloak over her face, and allowed the story to proceed.

When Elphin Irving and his sister Phemie were in their sixteenth year, for tradition says they were twins, their father was drowned in Corriewater, attempting to save his sheep from a sudden swell, to which all mountain streams are liable; and their mother, on the day of her husband's burial, laid down her head on the pillow, from which, on the seventh day, it was lifted to be dressed for the same grave. The inheritance left to the orphans may be

briefly described: seventeen acres of plough and pasture land, seven milk cows, and seven pet sheep, (many old people take delight in odd numbers;) and to this may be added, seven bonnet-pieces of Scottish gold, and a broad sword and spear, which their ancestor had wielded with such strength and courage in the battle of Dryfe-sands, that the minstrel who sang of that deed of arms, ranked him only second to the Scotts and Johnstones.

The youth and his sister grew in stature and in beauty. The brent bright brow, the clear blue eye, and frank and blithe deportment of the former, gave him some influence among the young women of the valley; while the latter was no less the admiration of the young men, and at fair and dance, and at bridal, happy was he who touched but her hand, or received the benediction of her eye. Like all other Scottish beauties, she was the theme of many a song; and while tradition is yet

busy with the singular history of her brother, song has taken all the care that rustic minstrelsy can of the gentleness of her spirit, and the charms of her person.

"Now I vow," exclaimed a wandering piper, "by mine own honoured instrument, and by all other instruments, that ever yielded music for the joy and delight of mankind, that there are more bonnie songs made about fair Phemie Irving than about all other dames of Annandale, and many of them are both high and bonnie. A proud lass maun she be, if her spirit hears; and men say, the dust lies not insensible of beautiful verse; for her charms are breathed through a thousand sweet lips, and no farther gone than yestermorn, I heard a lass singing on a green hill-side what I shall not readily forget. If ye like to listen, ye shall judge; and it will not stay the story long, nor mar it much, for it is short, and about Phemie Irving;" and accordingly he chanted the following

rude verses, not unaccompanied by his honoured instrument, as he called his pipe, which chimed in with great effect, and gave richness to a voice which felt better than it could express: —

FAIR PHEMIE IRVING.

1.

Gay is thy glen, Corrie,
With all thy groves flowering;
Green is thy glen, Corrie,
When July is showering;
And sweet is yon wood where
The small birds are bowering,
And there dwells the sweet one
Whom I am adoring.

2.

Her round neck is whiter
Than winter when snowing;
Her meek voice is milder
Than Ae in its flowing;
The glad ground yields music
Where she goes by the river;
One kind glance would charm me
For ever and ever.

3.

The proud and the wealthy
To Phemie are bowing;
No looks of love win they
With sighing or suing;
Far away maun I stand
With my rude wooing,
She's a flow'ret too lovely
To bloom for my pu'ing.

4.

O were I yon violet,
On which she is walking;
O were I yon small bird,
To which she is talking;
Or yon rose in her hand,
With its ripe ruddy blossom;
Or some pure gentle thought,
To be blest with her bosom.

This minstrel interruption, while it established Phemie Irving's claim to grace and to beauty, gave me additional confidence to pursue the story——

But minstrel skill, and true love tale, seemed to want their usual influence, when they sought to win her attention; she was

only observed to pay most respect to those youths who were most beloved by her brother; and the same hour that brought these twins to the world, seemed to have breathed through them a sweetness and an affection of heart and mind, which nothing could divide. If, like the virgin queen of the immortal poet, she walked "in maiden meditation fancy free," her brother Elphin seemed alike untouched with the charms of the fairest virgins in Corrie. He ploughed his field, he reaped his grain, he leaped, he ran, and wrestled, and danced, and sang, with more skill, and life, and grace, than all other youths of the district; but he had no twilight and stolen interviews: when all other young men had their loves by their side, he was single, though not unsought; and his joy seemed never perfect, save when his sister was near him. If he loved to share his time with her, she loved to share her time with him alone, or with the beasts of the field, or the birds of the air. She watched her little flock

late, and she tended it early; not for the sordid love of the fleece, unless it was to make mantles for her brother, but with the look of one who had joy in its company. The very wild creatures, the deer and the hares, seldom sought to shun her approach, and the bird forsook not its nest, nor stinted its song, when she drew nigh; such is the confidence which maiden innocence and beauty inspire.

It happened one summer, about three years after they became orphans, that rain had been for awhile withheld from the earth, the hill-sides began to parch, the grass in the vales to wither, and the stream of Corrie was diminished between its banks to the size of an ordinary rill. The shepherds drove their flocks to moor lands, and marsh and tarn had their reeds invaded by the scythe, to supply the cattle with food. The sheep of his sister were Elphin's constant care; he drove them to the moistest pastures during the day, and he often watched them at midnight, when

flocks, tempted by the sweet dewy grass, are known to browze eagerly, that he might guard them from the fox, and lead them to the choicest herbage. In these nocturnal watchings he sometimes drove his little flock over the water of Corrie, for the fords were hardly ankle-deep; or permitted his sheep to cool themselves in the stream, and taste the grass which grew along the brink. All this time not a drop of rain fell, nor did a cloud appear in the sky.

One evening, during her brother's absence with the flock, Phemie sat at her cottage-door, listening to the bleatings of the distant folds, and the lessened murmur of the water of Corrie, now scarcely audible beyond its banks. Her eyes, weary with watching along the accustomed line of road for the return of Elphin, were turned on the pool beside her, in which the stars were glimmering fitful and faint. As she looked she imagined the water grew brighter and brighter; a wild illumination presently

shone upon the pool, and leaped from bank to bank, and suddenly changing into a human form, ascended the margin, and passing her, glided swiftly into the cottage. The visionary form was so like her brother in shape and air, that starting up she flew into the house, with the hope of finding him in his customary seat. She found him not, and impressed with the terror which a wraith or apparition seldom fails to inspire, she uttered a shriek so loud and so piercing as to be heard at Johnstone bank, on the other side of the vale of Corrie.

An old woman now rose suddenly from her seat in the window-sill, the living dread of shepherds, for she travelled the country with a brilliant reputation for witchcraft, and thus she broke in upon the narrative: "I vow, young man, ye tell us the truth upset and down-thrust. I heard my douce grandmother say, that on the night when Elphin Irving disappeared — disappeared I shall call it, for the bairn can but be gone

for a season, to return to us in his own appointed time, — she was seated at the fire-side at Johnstone bank; the laird had laid aside his bonnet to take the book, when a shriek mair loud, believe me, than a mere woman's shriek,—and they can shriek loud enough, else they're sair wranged, — came over the water of Corrie, so sharp and shrilling, that the pewter plates dinneled on the wall: such a shriek, my douce grandmother said, as rang in her ear till the hour of her death, and she lived till she was aughty and aught, forty full ripe years after the event. But there is another matter, which, doubtless, I cannot compel ye to believe; it was the common rumour that Elphin Irving came not into the world like the other sinful creatures of the earth, but was one of the Kane-bairns of the fairies, whilk they had to pay to the enemy of man's salvation, every seventh year. The poor lady-fairy, — a mother's aye a mother, be she Elve's flesh or Eve's flesh,—hid her Elf son beside the christened flesh in

Marion Irving's cradle, and the auld enemy lost his prey for a time. Now hasten on with your story, which is not a bodle the waur for me. The maiden saw the shape of her brother, — fell into a faint, or a trance, and the neighbours came flocking in: — gang on with your tale, young man, and dinna be affronted because an auld woman helped ye wi't."

It is hardly known, I resumed, how long Phemie Irving continued in a state of insensibility. The morning was far advanced, when a neighbouring maiden found her seated in an old chair, as white as monumental marble; her hair, about which she had always been solicitous, loosened from its curls, and hanging disordered over her neck and bosom, her hands and forehead; the maiden touched the one, and kissed the other; they were as cold as snow: and her eyes, wide open, were fixed on her brother's empty chair, with the intensity of gaze of one who had witnessed the appearance of a spirit. She seemed

insensible of any one's presence, and sat fixed, and still, and motionless. The maiden, alarmed at her looks, thus addressed her:— "Phemie, lass, Phemie Irving! dear me, but this be awful! I have come to tell ye, that seven of your pet sheep have escaped drowning in the water; for Corrie, sae quiet and sae gentle yestreen, is rolling and dashing frae bank to bank this morning. Dear me, woman, dinna let the loss of the world's gear bereave ye of your senses. I would rather make ye a present of a dozen mug-ewes of the Tinwald brood myself; and now I think on't, if ye'll send over Elphin, I will help him hame with them in the gloaming myself. So, Phemie, woman, be comforted."

At the mention of her brother's name she cried out, "Where is he? Oh, where is he?"—gazed wildly round, and shuddering from head to foot, fell senseless on the floor. Other inhabitants of the valley, alarmed by the sudden swell of the river, which had augmented to a

torrent, deep and impassable, now came in to inquire if any loss had been sustained, for numbers of sheep and teds of hay had been observed floating down about the dawn of the morning. They assisted in reclaiming the unhappy maiden from her swoon; but insensibility was joy, compared to the sorrow to which she awakened. "They have ta'en him away, they have ta'en him away," she chanted, in a tone of delirious pathos; "him that was whiter and fairer than the lily on Lyddal-lee. They have long sought, and they have long sued, and they had the power to prevail against my prayers at last. They have ta'en him away; the flower is plucked from among the weeds, and the dove is slain amid a flock of ravens. They came with shout, and they came with song, and they spread the charm, and they placed the spell, and the baptized brow has been bowed down to the unbaptized hand. They have ta'en him away, they have ta'en him away; he was too lovely, and too good, and too

noble, to bless us with his continuance on earth; for what are the sons of men compared to him? — the light of the moon-beam to the morning sun; the glow-worm to the eastern star. They have ta'en him away; the invisible dwellers of the earth. I saw them come on him with shouting and with singing, and they charmed him where he sat, and away they bore him; and the horse he rode was never shod with iron, nor owned, before, the mastery of human hand. They have ta'en him away over the water, and over the wood, and over the hill. I got but ae look of his bonnie blue ee, but ae, ae look. But as I have endured what never maiden endured, so will I undertake what never maiden undertook, I will win him from them all. I know the invisible ones of the earth; I have heard their wild and wondrous music in the wild woods, and there shall a christened maiden seek him, and achieve his deliverance." She paused, and glancing around a circle of condoling faces, down which the tears were dropping

like rain, said, in a calm and altered, but still delirious tone — "Why do you weep, Mary Halliday? and why do you weep, John Graeme? Ye think that Elphin Irving,—oh, it's a bonnie, bonnie name, and dear to many a maiden's heart as well as mine, — ye think he is drowned in Corrie, and ye will seek in the deep, deep pools for the bonnie, bonnie corse, that ye may weep over it, as it lies in its last linen, and lay it, amid weeping and wailing, in the dowie kirk-yard. Ye may seek, but ye shall never find; so leave me to trim up my hair, and prepare my dwelling, and make myself ready to watch for the hour of his return to upper earth." And she resumed her household labours with an alacrity which lessened not the sorrow of her friends.

Meanwhile the rumour flew over the vale that Elphin Irving was drowned in Corrie-water. Matron and maid, old man and young, collected suddenly along the banks of the river, which now began to subside to its natural summer limits, and com-

menced their search; interrupted every now and then by calling from side to side, and from pool to pool, and by exclamations of sorrow for this misfortune. The search was fruitless: five sheep, pertaining to the flock which he conducted to pasture, were found drowned in one of the deep eddies; but the river was still too brown, from the soil of its moorland sources, to enable them to see what its deep shelves, its pools, and its overhanging and hazely banks concealed. They remitted farther search till the stream should become pure; and old man taking old man aside, began to whisper about the mystery of the youth's disappearance: old women laid their lips to the ears of their coevals, and talked of Elphin Irving's fairy parentage, and his having been dropped by an unearthly hand into a Christian cradle. The young men and maids conversed on other themes; they grieved for the loss of the friend and the lover, and while the former thought that a heart so kind and true was not left in the vale, the latter thought,

as maidens will, on his handsome person, gentle manners, and merry blue eye, and speculated with a sigh on the time when they might have hoped a return for their love. They were soon joined by others who had heard the wild and delirious language of his sister: the old belief was added to the new assurance, and both again commented upon by minds full of superstitious feeling, and hearts full of supernatural fears, till the youths and maidens of Corrievale held no more love trystes for seven days and nights, lest, like Elphin Irving, they should be carried away to augment the ranks of the unchristened chivalry.

It was curious to listen to the speculations of the peasantry. "For my part," said a youth, "if I were sure that poor Elphin escaped from that perilous water, I would not give the fairies a pound of hiplock wool for their chance of him. There has not been a fairy seen in the land since Donald Cargil, the Cameronian, conjured them into the Solway for playing on their pipes during

one of his nocturnal preachings on the hip of the Burnswark hill."

"Preserve me, bairn," said an old woman, justly exasperated at the incredulity of her nephew, "if ye winna believe what I both heard and saw at the moonlight end of Craigyburnwood on a summer night, rank after rank of the fairy folk; ye'll at least believe a douce man and a ghostly professor, even the late minister of Tinwaldkirk: his only son, I mind the lad weel with his long yellow locks and his bonnie blue eyes, when I was but a gilpie of a lassie, *he* was stolen away from off the horse at his father's elbow, as they crossed that false and fearsome water, even Locherbriggflow, on the night of the Midsummer fair of Dumfries. Aye, aye, who can doubt the truth of that; have not the godly inhabitants of Almsfield-town and Tinwaldkirk seen the sweet youth riding at midnight, in the midst of the unhallowed troop, to the sound of flute and of dulcimer; and though meikle they prayed, naebody tried to achieve his deliverance."

"I have heard it said by douce folk and sponsible," interrupted another, "that every seven years the elves and fairies pay kane, or make an offering of one of their children to the grand enemy of salvation, and that they are permitted to purloin one of the children of men to present to the fiend; a more acceptable offering, I'll warrant, than one of their own infernal brood that are Satan's sib allies, and drink a drop of the deil's blood every May morning. And touching this lost lad, ye all ken his mother was a hawk of an uncannie nest, a second cousin of Kate Kimmer, of Barfloshan, as rank a witch as ever rode on ragwort. Aye, Sirs, what's bred in the bone is ill to come out of the flesh."

On these and similar topics, which a peasantry full of ancient tradition and enthusiasm, and superstition, readily associate with the commonest occurrences of life, the people of Corrievale continued to converse till the fall of evening; when each seeking their home, renewed again the wondrous

subject, and illustrated it with all that popular belief and poetic imagination could so abundantly supply.

The night which followed this melancholy day was wild with wind and rain; the river came down broader and deeper than before, and the lightning, flashing by fits over the green woods of Corrie, showed the ungovernable and perilous flood sweeping above its banks. It happened that a farmer, returning from one of the border fairs, encountered the full swing of the storm; but mounted on an excellent horse, and mantled from chin to heel in a good grey plaid, beneath which he had the farther security of a thick great-coat, he sat dry in his saddle, and proceeded in the anticipated joy of a subsided tempest and a glowing morning sun. As he entered the long grove, or rather remains of the old Galwegian forest, which lines for some space the banks of the Corriewater, the storm began to abate, the wind sighed milder and milder among the trees; and here and there a star,

twinkling momentarily through the sudden rack of the clouds, showed the river raging from bank to brae. As he shook the moisture from his clothes, he was not without a wish that the day would dawn, and that he might be preserved on a road which his imagination beset with greater perils than the raging river; for his superstitious feeling let loose upon his path elf and goblin, and the current traditions of the district supplied very largely to his apprehension the ready materials of fear.

Just as he emerged from the wood, where a fine sloping bank, covered with short green sward, skirts the limit of the forest, his horse made a full pause, snorted, trembled, and started from side to side, stooped his head, erected his ears, and seemed to scrutinize every tree and bush. The rider, too, it may be imagined, gazed round and round, and peered warily into every suspicious looking place. His dread of a supernatural visitation was not much allayed, when he observed a female shape seated on

the ground at the root of a huge old oak-tree, which stood in the centre of one of those patches of verdant sward, known by the name of "fairy rings," and avoided by all peasants who wish to prosper. A long thin gleam of eastern daylight enabled him to examine accurately the being who, in this wild place and unusual hour, gave additional terror to this haunted spot. She was dressed in white from the neck to the knees; her arms, long, and round, and white, were perfectly bare; her head, uncovered, allowed her long hair to descend in ringlet succeeding ringlet, till the half of her person was nearly concealed in the fleece. Amidst the whole, her hands were constantly busy in shedding aside the tresses which interposed between her steady and uninterrupted gaze, down a line of old road which winded among the hills to an ancient burial ground.

As the traveller continued to gaze, the figure suddenly rose, and wringing the rain from her long locks, paced round and round

the tree, chanting in a wild and melancholy manner an equally wild and delirious song.

THE FAIRY OAK OF CORRIEWATER.

1.

The small bird's head is under its wing,
The deer sleeps on the grass;
The moon comes out, and the stars shine down,
The dew gleams like the glass:
There is no sound in the world so wide,
Save the sound of the smitten brass,
With the merry cittern and the pipe
Of the fairies as they pass.—
But oh! the fire maun burn and burn,
And the hour is gone, and will never return.

2.

The green hill cleaves, and forth, with a bound,
Comes elf and elfin steed;
The moon dives down in a golden cloud,
The stars grow dim with dread;
But a light is running along the earth,
So of heaven's they have no need:
O'er moor and moss with a shout they pass,
And the word is spur and speed—

But the fire maun burn, and I maun quake,
And the hour is gone that will never come back.

3.

And when they came to Craigyburnwood,
The Queen of the fairies spoke;
" Come, bind your steeds to the rushes so green,
And dance by the haunted oak:
I found the acorn on Heshbon-hill,
In the nook of a palmer's poke,
A thousand years since; here it grows!"
And they danced till the greenwood shook —
But oh! the fire, the burning fire,
The longer it burns, it but blazes the higher.

4.

" I have won me a youth," the Elf-queen said,
" The fairest that earth may see;
This night I have won young Elph Irving
My cup-bearer to be.
His service lasts but for seven sweet years,
And his wage is a kiss of me."
And merrily, merrily, laugh'd the wild elves
Round Corrie's greenwood tree. —
But oh! the fire it glows in my brain,
And the hour is gone, and comes not again.

5.

The Queen she has whisper'd a secret word,
" Come hither, my Elphin sweet,
And bring that cup of the charmed wine,
Thy lips and mine to weet."
But a brown elf shouted a loud loud shout,
" Come, leap on your coursers fleet,
For here comes the smell of some baptized flesh,
And the sounding of baptized feet."—
But oh! the fire that burns, and maun burn;
For the time that is gone will never return.

6.

On a steed as white as the new-milk'd milk,
The Elf-queen leap'd with a bound,
And young Elphin a steed like December snow
'Neath him at the word he found.
But a maiden came, and her christened arms
She linked her brother around,
And called on God, and the steed with a snort
Sank into the gaping ground. —
But the fire maun burn, and I maun quake,
And the time that is gone will no more come back.

7.

And she held her brother, and lo! he grew
A wild bull waked in ire;

And she held her brother, and lo! he changed
To a river roaring higher;
And she held her brother, and he became
A flood of the raging fire;
She shrieked and sank, and the wild elves laughed
Till mountain rang and mire. —
But oh! the fire yet burns in my brain,
And the hour is gone, and comes not again.

8.

"Oh maiden, why waxed thy faith so faint,
Thy spirit so slack and slaw?
Thy courage kept good till the flame wax'd wud,
Then thy might began to thaw;
Had ye kissed him with thy christen'd lip,
Ye had won him frae 'mang us a'.
Now bless the fire, the elfin fire,
That made thee faint and fa';
Now bless the fire, the elfin fire,
The longer it burns it blazes the higher."

At the close of this unusual strain, the figure sat down on the grass, and proceeded to bind up her long and disordered tresses, gazing along the old and unfrequented road. "Now God be my helper,"

said the traveller, who happened to be the laird of Johnstonebank, "can this be a trick of the fiend, or can it be bonnie Phemie Irving, who chants this dolorous sang? Something sad has befallen, that makes her seek her seat in this eerie nook amid the darkness and tempest: through might from aboon I will go on and see." And the horse, feeling something of the owner's reviving spirit in the application of spur-steel, bore him at once to the foot of the tree. The poor delirious maiden uttered a yell of piercing joy as she beheld him, and with the swiftness of a creature winged, linked her arms round the rider's waist, and shrieked till the woods rang. "Oh, I have ye now, Elphin, I have ye now," and she strained him to her bosom with a convulsive grasp. "What ails ye, my bonnie lass?" said the laird of Johnstonebank, his fears of the supernatural vanishing, when he beheld her sad and bewildered look. She raised her eyes at

the sound, and seeing a strange face, her arms slipped their hold, and she dropped with a groan on the ground.

The morning had now fairly broke: the flocks shook the rain from their sides, the shepherds hastened to inspect their charges, and a thin blue smoke began to stream from the cottages of the valley into the brightening air. The laird carried Phemie Irving in his arms, till he observed two shepherds ascending from one of the loops of Corriewater, bearing the lifeless body of her brother. They had found him whirling round and round in one of the numerous eddies, and his hands, clutched and filled with wool, showed that he had lost his life in attempting to save the flock of his sister. A plaid was laid over the body, which, along with the unhappy maiden in a half lifeless state, was carried into a cottage, and laid in that apartment distinguished among the peasantry by the name of the chamber. While the peasant's wife was left to take care of Phemie, — old

man and matron, and maid, had collected around the drowned youth, and each began to relate the circumstances of his death, when the door suddenly opened, and his sister, advancing to the corpse with a look of delirious serenity, broke out into a wild laugh and said: "O, it is wonderful, it's truly wonderful! that bare and death-cold body, dragged from the darkest pool of Corrie, with its hands filled with fine wool, wears the perfect similitude of my own Elphin! I'll tell ye — the spiritual dwellers of the earth, the Fairyfolk of our evening tale, have stolen the living body, and fashioned this cold and inanimate clod to mislead your pursuit. In common eyes this seems all that Elphin Irving would be, had he sunk in Corriewater; but so it seems not to me. Ye have sought the living soul, and ye have found only its garment. But oh, if ye had beheld him, as I beheld him to-night, riding among the elfin troop, the fairest of them all; had you clasped him in your arms, and

wrestled for him with spirits and terrible shapes from the other world, till your heart quailed and your flesh was subdued, then would ye yield no credit to the semblance which this cold and apparent flesh bears to my brother. But hearken, — on Hallowmass-eve, when the spiritual people are let loose on earth for a season, I will take my stand in the burial-ground of Corrie; and when my Elphin and his unchristened troop come past with the sound of all their minstrelsy, I will leap on him and win him, or perish for ever."

All gazed aghast on the delirious maiden, and many of her auditors gave more credence to her distempered speech than to the visible evidence before them. As she turned to depart, she looked round, and suddenly sunk upon the body, with tears streaming from her eyes, and sobbed out, "My brother! Oh, my brother!" She was carried out insensible, and again recovered; but relapsed into her ordinary delirium, in which she continued till the Hallow-eve

after her brother's burial. She was found seated in the ancient burial-ground, her back against a broken grave-stone, her locks white with frost-rime, watching with intensity of look the road to the kirk-yard: but the spirit which gave life to the fairest form of all the maids of Annandale was fled for ever. — Such is the singular story which the peasants know by the name of Elphin Irving, the Fairies' Cupbearer; and the title, in its fullest and most supernatural sense, still obtains credence among the industrious and virtuous dames of the romantic vale of Corrie.

RICHARD FAULDER, MARINER.

" It's sweet to go with hound and hawk,
O'er moor and mountain roamin';
It's sweeter to walk on the Solway side,
With a fair maid at the gloamin';
But its sweeter to bound o'er the deep green sea,
When the flood is chafed and foamin';
For the seaboy has then the prayer of good men,
And the sighing of lovesome woman.

" The wind is up, and the sail is spread,
And look at the foaming furrow,
Behind the bark as she shoots away,
As fleet as the outlaw's arrow;
And the tears drop fast from lovely eyes,
And hands are wrung in sorrow;—
But when we come back, there is shout and clap,
And mirth both night and morrow."

Old Ballad.

On a harvest afternoon, when the ripe grain, which clothed the western slope of the Cumberland hills, had partly submitted to the sickle, a party of reapers were seated on a small green knoll, enjoying the brief luxury of the dinner hour. The young men

lay stretched on the grass; the maidens sat plaiting and arranging their locks into more graceful and seducing ringlets; while three hoary old men sat abreast and upright, looking on the Sea of Solway, which was spread out, with all its romantic variety of headland, and rock, and bay, below them. The mid-day sun had been unusually sultry, accompanied with hot and suffocating rushings of wind; and the appearance of a huge and dark cloud, which hung, like a canopy of smoke and flame over a burning city, betokened, to an experienced swain, an approaching storm. One of the old reapers shook his head, and combing the remainder snow over his forehead with his fingers, said, "Woe's me! one token comes, and another token arises, of tempest and wrath on that darkening water. It comes to my memory like a dream — for I was but a boy then groping trouts in Ellenwater — that it was on such a day, some fifty years ago, that the Bonnie Babie Allan, of Saint Bees, was wrecked on that rock, o'er the

top of which the tide is whirling and boiling, — and the father and three brethren of Richard Faulder were drowned. How can I forget such a sea! — It leaped on the shore, among these shells and pebbles, as high as the mast of a brig; and threw its foam as far as the corn ricks of Walter Selby's stackyard, — and that's a good half mile."

"Ise warrant," interrupted a squat and demure old man, whose speech was a singular mixture of Cumbrian English and Border Scotch, — "Ise warrant, Willie, your memory will be rifer o' the loss of the Lovely Lass of Annanwater, who whomel'd, keel upward, on the hip of the Mermaid rock, and spilt her wameful of rare brandy into the thankless Solway. Faith, mickle good liquor has been thrown into that punch-bowl; but fiend a drop of grog was ever made out of such a thriftless basin. It will aiblens be long afore such a gude-send comes to our coast again. There was

Saunders Macmichael was drunk between yule and yule — forbye —"

"Wae's me, well may I remember that duleful day," interrupted the third bandsman: "it cost me a fair son — my youngest, and my best — I had seven once — alas, what have I now! — three were devoured by that false and unstable water — three perished by the sharp swords of those Highland invaders who slew so many of the gallant Dacres at Clifton and Carlisle — but the Cumberland ravens had their revenge! — I mind the head and lang yellow hair of him who slew my son, hanging over the Scottish gate of Carlisle. Ay, I was avenged no doubt. But the son I have left has disgraced, for ever, our pure blood, by wedding a border Gordon, with as mickle Gypsey blood in her veins as would make plebeians of all the Howards and the Percies. I would rather have stretched him in the church-ground of Allanbay, with the mark of a Hielandman's brand on his brow,

as was the lot of his brave brothers — or gathered his body from among these rocks, as I did those of my other children! — But oh, Sirs, when did man witness so fearful a coming on as yon dark sky forebodes?"

While this conversation went on, the clouds had assembled on the summits of the Scottish and Cumbrian mountains, and a thick canopy of vapour, which hung over the Isle of Man, waxed more ominous and vast. A light, as of a fierce fire burning, dropped frequent from its bosom, — throwing a sort of supernatural flame along the surface of the water, — and showing distinctly the haven, and houses, and shipping, and haunted castle, of the Isle. The old men sat silently gazing on the scene, while cloud succeeded cloud, till the whole congregating vapour, unable to sustain itself longer, stooped suddenly down from the opposing peaks of Criffel and Skiddaw, filling up the mighty space between the mountains, and approaching so close to the

bosom of the ocean, as to leave room alone for the visible flight of the seamew and cormorant.

The water-fowl, starting from the sea, flew landward in a flock, fanning the waves with their wings, and uttering that wild and piercing scream, which distinguishes them from all other fowls, when their haunts are disturbed. The clouds and darkness increased, and the bird on the rock, the cattle in the fold, and the reapers in the field, all looked upward, and seaward, expecting the coming of the storm.

"Benjamin Forster," said an old reaper to me, as I approached his side, and stood gazing on the sea — "I counsel thee, youth, to go home, and shelter these young hairs beneath thy mother's roof. The mountains have covered their heads — and hearken, too, — that hollow moan running among the cliffs! — There is a voice of mourning, my child, goes along the seacliffs of Solway before she swallows up the seafaring man.

Seven times have I heard that warning voice in one season — and it cries, woe to the wives and the maids of Cumberland!"

On the summit of a knoll, which swelled gently from the margin of a small beck or rivulet, and which was about a dozen yards apart from the main body of the reapers, — sat a young Cumbrian maiden, who seemed wholly intent on the arrangement of a profusion of nut-brown locks, which descended, in clustering masses, upon her back and shoulders. This wilderness of ringlets owed, apparently, as much of its curling elegance to nature as to art, and flowed down on all sides with a profusion rivalling the luxuriant tresses of the Madonnas of the Roman painters. Half in coquetry, and half in willingness to restrain her tresses under a small fillet of green silk, her fingers, long, round, and white, continued shedding and disposing this beautiful fleece. At length the locks were fastened under the fillet — a band denoting maidenhood — and her lily-looking hands, dropping across each other in

repose from their toil, allowed the eye to admire a smooth and swan-white neck, which presented one of those natural and elegant sinuous lines, that sculptors desire so much to communicate to marble. Amid all this sweetness and simplicity, there appeared something of rustic archness and coquetry; — but it was a kind of natural and born vanity, a little of which gives a grace and joyousness to beauty. Those pure creations of female simplicity, which shine in pastoral speculations, are unknown among the ruddy and buxom damsels of Cumberland. The maritime nymphs of Allanbay are not unconscious of their charms, or careless about their preservation; and to this sweet maiden, nature had given so much female tact, as enabled her to know that a beautiful face, and large dark hazel eyes, have some influence among men. — When she had wreathed up her tresses to her own satisfaction, she began to cast around her such glances, — suddenly shot, and as suddenly withdrawn — as would have been

dangerous, concentrated on one object, but which, divided with care, even to the fractional part of a glance, among several hinds, infused a sort of limited joy, without exciting hope. Indeed, this was the work of the maiden's eyes alone, for her heart was employed about its own peculiar care, and its concern was fixed on a distant and different object. She pulled from her bosom a silken case, curiously wrought with the needle: A youth sat on the figured prow of a bark, and beneath him a mermaid swam on the green silken sea, waving back her long tresses with one hand, and supplicating the young seaman with the other. — This singular production seemed the sanctuary of her triumphs over the hearts of men. She began to empty out its contents in her lap; and the jealousy of many a Cumbrian maiden, from Allanbay to Saint Bees'-head, would have been excited by learning whose loves these emblems represented. There were letters expressing the ardour of rustic affection — locks of hair, both black and

brown, tied up in shreds of silk, — and keepsakes, from the magnitude of a simple brass pin, watered with gold, to a massy brooch of price and beauty. She arranged these primitive treasures, and seemed to ponder over the vicissitudes of her youthful affections. Her eyes, after lending a brief scrutiny to each keepsake and symbol, finally fixed their attention upon a brooch of pure gold: as she gazed on it, she gave a sigh, and looked seaward, with a glance which showed that her eye was following in the train of her affections. The maiden's brow saddened at once, as she beheld the thick gathering of the clouds; and, depositing her treasure in her bosom, she continued to gaze on the darkening sea, with a look of increasing emotion.

The experienced mariners on the Scottish and Cumbrian coasts appeared busy mooring, and double mooring their vessels. Some sought a securer haven; and those who allowed their barks to remain, prepared them, with all their skill, for the

encounter of a storm, which no one reckoned distant. Something now appeared in the space between the sea and the cloud, and emerging more fully, and keeping the centre of the sea, it was soon known to be a heavily laden ship, apparently making for the haven of Allanbay. When the cry of "A ship! a ship!" arose among the reapers, — one of the old men, whose eyes were something faded, after gazing intently, said, with a tone of sympathy, — "It *is* a ship indeed, — and woe's me but the path it is in be perilous in a moment like this!"

"She'll never pass the sunken rocks of Saint Bees'-head," said one old man: "Nor weather the headland of Barnhourie, and the caverns of Colvend," said another: — "And should she pass both," said a third, "the coming tempest, which now heaves up the sea within a cable's length of her stern, will devour her ere she finds shelter in kindly Allanbay!"

"Gude send," said he of the mixed

brood of Cumberland and Caledonia, — " since she maun be wrecked, that she spills nae her treasure on the thankless shores of Galloway! These northerns be a keen people, with a ready hand, and a clutch like steel: besides, she seems a Cumberland bark, and its meet that we have our ain fish-guts to our ain sea-maws."

" Oh, see, see!" said the old man, three of whose children had perished when the Bonie Babie Allan sank, — " see how the waves are beginning to be lifted up! Hearken how deep calls to deep; and hear, and see, how the winds and the windows of heaven are loosened! Save thy servants — even those seafaring men — should there be but one righteous person on board!"—And the old reaper rose, and stretched out his hands in supplication as he spoke.

The ship came boldly down the middle of the bay, the masts bending and quivering, and the small deck crowded with busy

men, who looked wistfully to the coast of Cumberland.

" She is the Lady Johnstone of Annanwater," said one, " coming with wood from Norway."

" She is the Buxom Bess of Allanbay," said another, " laden with the best of West India rum."—

" And I," said the third old man, " would have thought her the Mermaid of Richard Faulder, — but," added he, in a lower tone, " the Mermaid has not been heard of, nor seen, for many months; — and the Faulders are a doomed race: — his bonny brig and he are in the bottom of the sea; and with them sleeps the pride of Cumberland, Frank Forster of Derwentwater."

The subject of their conversation approached within a couple of miles, turned her head for Allanbay, and, though the darkness almost covered her as a shroud, there seemed every chance that she would reach the port ere the tempest burst. But

just as she turned for the Cumbrian shore, a rush of wind shot across the bay, furrowing the sea as hollow as the deepest glen, and heaving it up mast-head high. The cloud, too, dropt down upon the surface of the sea; the winds, loosened at once, lifted the waves in multitudes against the cliffs; and the foam fell upon the reapers, like a shower of snow. The loud chafing of the waters on the rocks prevented the peasants from hearing the cries of men whom they had given up to destruction. At length the wind, which came in whirlwind gusts, becoming silent for a little while, the voice of a person singing was heard from the sea, far above the turbulence of the waves. Old William Dacre uttered a shout, and said —

"That is the voice of Richard Faulder, if ever I heard it in the body. He is a fearful man, and never sings in the hour of gladness, but in the hour of danger — terror and death are beside him when he

lifts his voice to sing. This is the third time I have listened to his melody, — and many mothers will weep, and maidens too, if his song have the same ending as of old."

The voice waxed bolder, and approached the shore; and, as nothing could be discerned, so thick was the darkness, the song was impressive, and even awful.

THE SONG OF RICHARD FAULDER.

1.

It's merry, it's merry, among the moonlight,
When the pipe and the cittern are sounding —
To rein, like a war-steed, my shallop, and go
O'er the bright waters merrily bounding.
It's merry, it's merry, when fair Allanbay,
With its bridal candles is glancing —
To spread the white sails of my vessel, and go
Among the wild sea-waters dancing.

2.

And it's blythesomer still, when the storm is come on,
And the Solway's wild waves are ascending
In huge and dark curls — and the shaven masts groan,
And the canvas to ribbons is rending; —

When the dark heaven stoops down unto the dark
deep,
And the thunder speaks 'mid the commotion,
Awaken and see, ye who slumber and sleep,
The might of the Lord on the ocean!

3.

This frail bark, so late growing green in the wood,
Where the roebuck is joyously ranging, —
Now doomed for to roam o'er the wild fishy flood,
When the wind to all quarters is changing —
Is as safe to thy feet as the proud palace floor,
And as firm as green Skiddaw below thee, —
For God has come down to the ocean's dread deeps,
His might and his mercy to show thee.

As the voice ceased, the ship appeared, through the cloud, approaching the coast in full swing; her sails rent, and the wave and foam flashing over her, mid-mast high. The maiden, who has already been introduced to the affection of the reader, gazed on the ship, and, half suppressing a shriek of joy, flew down to the shore, where the cliffs, sloping backwards from the sea, presented a ready landing-place,

when the waves were more tranquil than now. Her fellow-reapers came crowding to her side, and looked on the address and hardihood of the crew, -- who, with great skill and success, navigated their little bark through and among the sand-banks, and sunken rocks, which make the Solway so perilous and fatal to seamen. At last they obtained the shelter of a huge cliff, which, stretching like a promontory into the sea, broke the impetuosity of the waves, and afforded them hopes of communicating with their friends, who, with ropes and horses, were seen hastening to the shore.

But, although Richard Faulder and his Mermaid were now little more than a cable-length distant from the land, the peril of their situation seemed little lessened. The winds had greatly abated; but the sea, with that impulse communicated by the storm, threw itself against the rocks, elevating its waters high over the summits of the highest cliffs, and leap-

ing and foaming around the bark, with a force that made her reel and quiver, and threatened to stave her to pieces.—The old and skilful mariner himself was observed, amid the confusion and danger, as collected and self-possessed as if he had been entering the bay in the tranquillity of a summer evening, with a hundred hands waving and welcoming his return. His spirit and deliberation seemed more or less communicated to his little crew; but chiefly to Frank Forster, who, in the ardent buoyancy of youth, moved as he moved, thought as he thought, and acted from his looks alone, as if they had been both informed with one soul. In those times, the benevolence of individuals had not been turned to multiply the means of preserving seamen's lives; and the mariner, in the hour of peril, owed his life to chance — his own endeavours — or the intrepid exertions of the humane peasantry.

The extreme agitation of the sea ren-

dered it difficult to moor or abandon the bark with safety; and several young men ventured fearlessly into the flood on horseback, but could not reach the rope which the crew threw out to form a communication with the land. Young Forster, whose eye seemed to have singled out some object of regard on shore, seized the rope; then leaping, with a plunge, into the sea, he made the waters flash! Though for a moment he seemed swallowed up, he emerged from the billows like a waterfowl, and swam shoreward with unexpected agility and strength. The old mariner gazed after him with a look of deep concern; but none seemed more alarmed than the maiden with many keepsakes. As he seized the rope, the lily suddenly chased the rose from her cheek, and uttering a loud scream, and crying out, "Oh, help him, save him!" she flew down to the shore, and plunged into the water, holding out her arms, while the flood burst against her, breast high.

"God guide me, Maud Marchbank," cried William Dacre, "ye'll drown the poor lad out of pure love,—I think," continued he, stepping back, and shaking the brine from his clothes, "I am the mad person myself—a caress and a kiss from young Frank of Derwentwater is making her comfortable enough. Alas! but youth be easily pleased—it is as the northern song says—

"Contented wi' little and cantie wi' mair';"

but old age is a delightless time!"

To moor the bark was the labour of a few moments; and fathers, and mothers, and sisters, and sweethearts, welcomed the youths they had long reckoned among the dead, with affection and tears. All had some friendly hand and eye to welcome and rejoice in them, save the brave old mariner, Richard Faulder alone. To him no one spoke, on him no eye was turned; all seemed desirous of shunning communication with a man to whom common belief

attributed endowments and powers, which came not as knowledge and might come to other men; and whose wisdom was of that kind against which the most prudent divines, and the most skilful legislators, directed the rebuke of church and law. I remember hearing my father say, that when Richard Faulder, who was equally skilful in horsemanship and navigation, offered to stand on his grey horse's bare back, and gallop down the street of Allanbay, he was prevented from betting against the accomplishment of this equestrian vaunt by a wary Scotchman, who, in the brief manner of his country, said, "Dinna wager, Thomas — God guide your wits — that man's no cannie!" — At that time, though a stripling of seventeen, and possessed strongly with the belief of the mariner's singular powers, I could not avoid sympathizing with his fortune, and the forlorn look with which he stood on the deck, while his companions were welcomed and caressed on shore.

Nothing, indeed, could equal the joy which fathers and mothers manifested towards their children, — but the affection and tenderness with which they were hailed by the bright eyes of the Cumbrian maidens.

"His name be praised!" said one old man, to whose bosom a son had been unexpectedly delivered from the waves.

"And blessed be the hour ye were saved from the salt sea, and that fearful man," — said a maiden, whose blushing cheek, and brightening eye, indicated more than common sympathy.

"And oh! Stephen Porter, my son," resumed the father, "never set foot on shipboard with that mariner more!"

In another group stood a young seaman with his sister's arms linked round his neck; receiving the blessings and the admonitions which female lips shower so vainly upon the sterner sex: — "This is the third time, Giles, thou hast sailed with Richard

Faulder: and every time my alarm and thy perils increase. — Many a fair face he has witnessed the fate of, — and many a fair ship has he survived the wreck of: — think of the sea, since think of it thou must — but never more think of it with such a companion."

In another group, a young woman stood gazing on a sailor's face, and, in her looks, fear and love held equal mastery. "Oh! William Rowanberry," said she, and her hand trembled with affection in his while she spoke, — "I would have held my heart widowed for one year and a day, in memory of thee — and though there be fair lads in Ullswater, and fairer still in Allanbay, — I'll no say they would have prevailed against my regard for thee before the summer. — But I warn thee," and she whispered, waving her hand seaward to give importance to her words, — "never be found on the great deep with that man again!" —

Meanwhile, the subject of this singular

conversation kept pacing from stem to stern of the Mermaid — gazing, now and then, wistfully shoreward — though he saw not a soul with whom he might share his affections. His grey hair, and his melancholy look, won their way to my youthful regard, while his hale and stalwart frame could not fail of making an impression on one not wholly insensible to the merits of the exterior person. A powerful mind should in poetical justice have a noble place of abode. I detached myself a little from the mass of people that filled the shore, and seeming to busy myself with some drift wood, which the storm had brought to the hollow of a small rock, I had an opportunity of hearing the old mariner chant, as he paced to and fro, the fragment of an old maritime ballad, part of which is still current among the seamen of Solway, along with many other singular rhymes full of marine superstition and adventure.

SIR RICHARD'S VOYAGE.

1.

Sir Richard shot swift from the shore, and sailed
  Till he reached Barnhourie's steep,
And a voice came to him from the green land,
  And one from the barren deep.
The green sea shuddered, and he did shake,
For the words were those which no mortals make.

2.

Away he sailed — and the lightning came,
  And streamed from the top of his mast;
Away he sailed, and the thunder came,
  And spoke from the depth of the blast: —
"O God!" he said, — and his tresses so hoar
Shone bright i' the flame, as he shot from the shore.

3.

Away he sailed — and the green isles smiled,
  And the sea-birds sang around:
He sought to land — and down sank the shores,
  With a loud and a murmuring sound —
And where the green wood and the sweet sod should be,
There tumbled a wild and a shoreless sea.

4.

Away he sailed — and the moon looked out,
  With one large star by her side —
Down shot the star, and upsprang the sea-fowl
  With a shriek — and roared the tide!

The bark, with a leap, seemed the stars to sweep,
And then to dive in the hollowest deep.

5.

Criffel's green mountain towered on his right —
Upon his left, Saint Bees —
Behind, — Caerlaverock's charmed ground —
Before, — the wild wide seas: —
And there a witch-fire, broad and bright,
Shed far a wild unworldly light! —

6.

A lady sat high on Saint Bees's head,
With her pale cheek on her hand;
She gazed forth on the troubled sea,
And on the troubled land:
She lifted her hands to heaven — her eyes
Rained down bright tears — still the shallop flies.

7.

The shallop shoulders the surge and flies, —
But at that lady's prayer,
The charmed wind fell mute, nor stirr'd
The rings of her golden hair: —
And over the sea there pass'd a breath
From heaven — the sea lay mute as death.

8.

And the shallop sunders the gentle flood,
No breathing wind is near:
And the shallop sunders the gentle flood,
And the flood lies still with fear —
And the ocean, the earth, and the heaven smile sweet
As Sir Richard kneels low at that lady's feet!

While the old mariner chanted this maritime rhyme, he looked upon me from time to time, — and, perhaps, felt pleased in exciting the interest of a youthful mind, and obtaining a regard which had been but sparingly bestowed in his native land. He loosed a little skiff, and, stepping into it, pushed through the surge to the place where I stood, and was in a moment beside me. I could not help gazing, with an eye reflecting wonder and respect, on a face — bold, mournful, and martial, as his was, — which had braved so long "the battle and the breeze." He threw across my shoulders a mantle of leopard skin, — and said, as he walked towards his little cottage on the rock, — "Youth, I promised that mantle to

the first one who welcomed me from a voyage of great peril:—take it, and be happier than the giver,—and glad am I to be welcomed by the son of my old Captain Randal Forster."

Such were the circumstances under which I became acquainted with Richard Faulder of Allanbay. At his lonely hearth I was afterwards a frequent and welcome guest, and an attentive and wondering auditor to his wild maritime legends, gathered on many an isle and mainland coast; but none of all his stories made a deeper impression on my memory than the Tale of the LAST LORD OF HELVELLYN.

THE LAST LORD

OF

HELVELLYN.

"An ancient curse still clings to their name."

"It was, I think, in the year seventeen hundred and thirty-three, that, one fine summer evening, I sat on the summit of Rosefoster-cliff, gazing on the multitudes of waves which, swelled by the breeze, and whitened by the moonlight, undulated as far as the eye could reach. The many lights, gleaming from Allanbay, were extinguished one by one; the twinklings of remote Saint Bees glimmered fainter and fainter on the Solway; while the villages and mansions on the Scottish coast, from Annand to Kirkcudbright, were perfectly

silent and dark, as beseemed their devout and frugal inhabitants. As I sat and thought on the perils I had encountered and braved on the great deep, I observed a low dark mist arise from the middle of the Solway; which, swelling out, suddenly came rolling huge and sable towards the Cumberland shore. Nor was fear or fancy long in supplying this exhalation with sails, and penons, and the busy hum and murmur of mariners. As it approached the cliff on which I had seated myself, it was not without dismay that I observed it become more dark, and assume more distinctly the shape of a barge, with a shroud for a sail. It left the sea, and settled on the beach within sea-mark, maintaining still its form, and still sending forth the merry din of mariners. In a moment the voices were changed from mirth to sorrow; and I heard a sound and outcry like the shriek of a ship's company whom the sea is swallowing. The cloud dissolved away, and

in its place I beheld, as it were, the forms of seven men, shaped from the cloud, and stretched black on the beach; even as corses are prepared for the coffin. I was then young, and not conversant with the ways in which He above reveals and shadows out approaching sorrow to man. I went down to the beach, and though the moon, nigh the full, and in mid-heaven, threw down an unbroken light, — rendering visible mountain, and headland, and sea, so that I might count the pebbles and shells on the shore, — the seven black shadows of men had not departed, and there appeared a space in the middle, like room measured out for an eighth. A strange terror came upon me; and I began to dread that this vision was sent for my warning; for be assured, Heaven hath many and singular revelations for the welfare and instruction of man. I prayed, and, while I prayed, the seven shadows began to move — filling up the space prepared for another: then

they waxed dimmer and dimmer, and then wholly vanished!

"I was much moved; and, deeming it the revelation of approaching sorrow, in which I was to be a sharer, it was past midnight before I could fall asleep. The sun had been some time risen when I was awakened by Simon Forester, who, coming to my bed-side, said, 'Richard Faulder, arise, for young Lord William of Helvellyn-Hall has launched his new barge on the Solway, and seven of the best and boldest mariners of Allanbay must bear him company to bring his fair bride from Preston-Hall — even at the foot of the mountain Criffell; hasten and come, for he sails not, be sure, without Richard Faulder!'

"It was a gallant sight to see a shallop, with her halsers and sails of silk, covered with streamers, and damasked with gold, pushing gaily from the bay. It was gallant, too, to behold the lordly bridegroom,

as he stood on the prow, looking towards his true-love's land; not heeding the shout, and the song, and the music-swell, with which his departure was hailed. It was gallant to see the maids and the matrons of Cumberland, standing in crowds, on headland and cliff, waving their white hands seaward, as we spread our sails to the wind, and shot away into the Solway, with our streamers dancing and fluttering like the mane of a steed as he gallops against the wind. Proud of our charge, and glorying in our skill, we made the good ship go through the surge as we willed; and every turn we made, and every time we wetted her silken sails, there came shout and trumpet-sound from the shore, applauding the seven merry mariners of Allanbay.

"Helvellyn-Hall, of which there is now no stone standing, save an old sun-dial around which herdsmen gather at noonday, to hear of old marvels of the Foresters,

— was an extensive mansion, built in the times when perils from the pirate and the Scot were dreaded, — and stood on a swelling knoll, encompassed with wood, visible from afar to mariners. In the centre was a tower, and on the summit of the tower was a seat, and in that seat tradition will yet tell you that the good Lord Walter Forester sat for a certain time, in every day of the year, looking on the sea. The swallows and other birds which made their nests and their roosts on the castle-top, became so accustomed to his presence, that they built, and sang, and brought forth their young beside him; and old men, as they beheld him, shook their heads, and muttered over the ancient prophecy, which a saint, who suffered from persecution, had uttered against the house of Helvellyn.

Let the Lord of Helvellyn look long on the sea —
For a sound shall he hear, and a sight shall he see;

The sight he shall see is a bonnie ship sailing,
The sound he shall hear is of weeping and wailing;
A sight shall he see on the green Solway shore,
And no lord of Helvellyn shall ever see more.

"As we scudded swiftly through the water, I looked towards the shore of Cumberland, stretching far and near, with all its winding outline, interrupted with woody promontories; and there I beheld the old Lord Walter of Helvellyn, seated on the topmost tower of his castle, looking towards the Scottish shore. I thought on the dying man's rhyme; and thought on the vision of last night: and I counted the mariners, and looked again on the castle and Lord Walter; and I saw that the fulfilling of the prophecy and the vision was approaching. Though deeply affected, I managed the barge with my customary skill, and she flew across the bay, leaving a long furrow of foam behind. Michael Halmer, an old mariner of Allanbay, afterwards told me, he never beheld a fairer sight than the barge that day, breasting

the billows; and he stood, warding off the sun with his hands from his fading eyes, till we reached the middle of the bay. At that time, he said, he beheld something like a ship formed of a black cloud, sailing beside us, which moved as we moved, and tacked as we tacked; had the semblance of the same number of mariners, and, in every way, appeared like the bridegroom's barge! He trembled with dismay, for he knew the spectre shallop of Solway, which always sails by the side of the ship which the sea is about to swallow. It was not my fortune to behold fully this fearful vision; but, while I gazed towards Helvellyn-Hall, I felt a dread, and although I saw nothing on which my fears could fix, I remember that a kind of haze or exhalation, resembling the thin shooting of a distant light, floated through the air at our side, which I could not long endure to look upon. The old Lord still preserved his position on the tower, and sat gazing towards us, as still and motionless

as a marble statue, and with an intensity of gaze like one who is watching the coming of destiny.

"The acclamations which greeted our departure from Cumberland, were exceeded by those which welcomed us to the Scottish shore. The romantic and mountainous coast of Colvend and Siddick was crowded with shepherd, and matron, and maid, who stood as motionless as their native rocks, and as silent too, till we approached within reach of their voices, and then such a shout arose, as startled the gulls and cormorants from rock and cavern for a full mile. The Scotch are a demure, a careful, and a singular people; and, amid much homeliness of manner, have something of a poetical way of displaying their affections, which they treasure too for great occasions, or, as they say, "daimen times." There are certain of their rustics much given to the composition of song and of ballad, in which a natural elegance occasionally glimmers among their antique and liquid

dialect. I have been told the Lowland language of Scotland is more soft and persuasive than even that of England; and, assuredly there was Martin Robson, a mariner of mine, in the Mermaid, whose wily Scotch tongue made the hearts of half the damsels of Cumberland dance to their lips. But many of their ballads are of a barbarous jingle, and can only be admired because the names of those whom their authors love and hate, and the names of hill, and dale, and coast, and stream, are interwoven with a ready ease unknown among the rustic rhymes of any other people.

" Preston-Hall—the plough has long since passed over its foundation stones!—was long the residence of a branch of the powerful and ancient name of Maxwell; and such was its fame for generosity, that the beggar or pilgrim who went in at the eastern gate empty, always came out at the western gate full, and blessing the bounty of the proprietor. It stood at the bottom of a deep

and beautiful bay, at the entrance of which two knolls, slow in their swell from the land, and abrupt in their rise from the sea, — seemed, almost, to shut out all approach. In former times, they had been crowned with slight towers of defence. It was a fairy nook for beauty; and tradition, which loves to embellish the scenes on which nature has been lavish of her bounty, asserted that the twin hillocks of Preston bay were formerly one green hill, till a wizard, whose name has not yet ceased to work marvels, cleft the knoll asunder with his wand, and poured the sea into the aperture, — laying, at the same time, the foundation-stone of Preston-Hall, with his own hand*. On the sides and summits

* Scotland is rife with the labours of wizard and witch. The beautiful green mountain of Criffel, and its lesser and immediate companions, were created by a singular disaster which befel Dame Ailie Gunson. This noted and malignant witch had sustained an insult from the sea of Solway, as she crossed it in her wizard shallop, formed from a cast-off slipper;

of these small hills, stood two crowds of peasants, who welcomed the coming of Lord William with the sounding of instruments of no remarkable harmony. As this clamorous hail ceased, the melody of maidens' tongues made ample amends for the instrumental discord. They greeted us as we passed with this poetical welcome, after the manner of their country.

THE MAIDENS' SONG.

Maids of Colvend.

Ye maidens of Allanbay, sore may ye mourn,
For your lover is gone — and will wedded return;
His white sail is fill'd, and the barge cannot stay,
Wide flashes the water — she shoots through the bay.

she, therefore, gathered a huge creelful of earth and rock, and, stride after stride, was advancing to close up for ever the entrance of that beautiful bay! An old and devout mariner who witnessed her approach, thrice blessed himself, and at each time a small mountain fell out of the witch's creel; the last was the largest, and formed the mountain Criffel, which certain rustic antiquarians say is softened from " creel fell," for the witch dropt earth and creel in despair.

Weep, maidens of Cumberland, shower your tears
salter,—
The priest is prepared, and the bride's at the altar!

Maids of Siddick.

The bride she is gone to the altar — and far,
And in wrath, flies gay Gordon of green Lochinvar;
Young Maxwell of Munshes, thy gold spur is dyed
In thy steed, and thy heart leaps in anguish and
pride —
The bold men of Annand and proud Niddisdale
Have lost her they loved, and may join in the wail.

Maids of Colvend.

Lord William is come; and the bird on the pine,
The leaf on the tree, and the ship on the brine,
The blue heaven above, and below the green earth,
Seem proud of his presence, and burst into mirth.
Then come, thou proud fair one, in meek modest
mood —
The bridal bed's ready — unloosen thy snood!

Maids of Siddick.

The bridal bed's ready; — but hearken, high lord!
Though strong be thy right arm, and sharp be thy
sword,—

Mock not Beatrice Maxwell! — else there shall be sorrow
Through Helvellyn's valleys, ere sun-rise to-morrow:
Away, haste away! can a gallant groom falter,
When the bridal wine's pour'd, and the bride's at the altar!

"During this minstrel salutation, the barge floated into the bosom of Preston-bay; and, through all its woody links, and greenwood nooks, the song sounded mellow and more mellow, as it was flung from point to point over the sunny water. The barge soon approached the green sward, which, sloping downwards from the hall, bordering with its livelier hue the dull deep green of the ocean, presented a ready landing place. When we were within a lance's length of the shore, there appeared, coming towards us from a deep grove of holly, a female figure, attired in the manner of the farmer matrons of Scotland, — with a small plaid, or mantle, fastened over her grey lint-and-woollen gown, and a white cap, or mutch, surmounting, rather than covering, a profusion of lyart

locks which came over her brow and neck, like remains of winter snow. She aided her steps with a staff, and descending to the prow of the barge, till the sea touched her feet, stretched her staff seaward, and said with a deep voice and an unembarrassed tone — ' What wouldest thou, William Forster, the doomed son of a doomed house, with Beatrice Maxwell, the blessed child of a house whose name shall live, and whose children shall breathe, while green woods grow, and clear streams run? Return as thou camest, nor touch a shore hostile to thee and thine. If thy foot displaces but one blade of grass — thy life will be as brief as the endurance of thy name, which that giddy boy is even now writing on the sand within sea-mark: — the next tide will pass over THEE — and blot IT out for ever and for ever! Thy father, even now watching thy course from his castle top, shall soon cease to be the warder of his house's destiny; and the Cumberland boor, as he gazes into the

bosom of the Solway, shall sigh for the ancient and valiant name of Forster.'

"While this singular speech was uttering, I gazed on the person of the speaker — from whom no one, who once looked, could well withdraw his eyes. She seemed some seventy years old, but unbowed or unbroken by age, — and had that kind of commanding look which common spiritsd read. Lord William listened to her words with a look of kindness and respect: — 'Margery Forsythe,' he said, 'thou couldest have prophesied more fortunately and wisely, hadst thou wished it — but thou art a faithful friend and servant to my Beatrice — accept this broad piece of gold, and imagine a more pleasant tale, when, with the evening tide, I return with my love to Helvellyn.'

"The gold fell at the old woman's feet, but it lay glittering and untouched among the grass, for her mind and eye seemed intent on matters connected with the glory of her master's house.

" ' Friend am I to Beatrice Maxwell, but no servant,' said Margery, in a haughty tone, ' though it's sweet to serve a face so beautiful. Touch not this shore, I say again, William Forster — but it's vain to forbid — the thing that must be must — we are fore-ordained to run our course — and this is the last course of the gallant house of Forster.'

" She then stepped aside, opposing Lord William no longer, who, impatient at her opposition, was preparing to leap ashore. Dipping her staff in the water as a fisher dips his rod, she held it dripping towards the Solway, to which she now addressed herself:—' False and fathomless sea—slumbering now in the sweet summer sun, like a new lulled babe, I have lived by thy side for years of sin that I shall not sum; and every year hast thou craved and yearned for thy morsel, and made the maids and matrons wail in green Galloway and Nithsdale. When wilt thou be satisfied, thou hungry sea? — even now, sunny and sweet

as thou seemest, dost thou crave for the mouthful ordained to thee by ancient prophecy, and the fair and the dainty morsel is at hand.'

"Her eyes, dim and spiritless at first, became filled, while she uttered this apostrophe to the sea, with a wild and agitated light — her stature seemed to augment, and her face to dilate with more of grief than joy; and her locks, snowy and sapless with age, writhed on her forehead and temples, as if possessed with a distinct life of their own. Throwing her staff into the sea, she then went into the grove of holly, and disappeared.

"'May I be buried beyond the plummet sound,' said Sam Dacre of Skiddawbeck, 'if I fail to prove if that dame's tartan kirtle will flatten swan-shot, — I never listened to such unblessed language,' and he presented his carbine after her — while William Macgowan, a Galloway sailor, laid his hand on the muzzle, and said,

"'I'll tell thee what, Margery Forsythe

has mair forecast in the concerns o' the great deep than a wise mariner ought to despise. Swan-shot, man! — she would shake it off her charmed calimanco kirtle as a swan shakes snow from its wings. I see ye're scantly acquaint with the uncannie pranks of our Colvend dame. But gang up to the Boran point, and down to Barnhourie bank, and if the crews of two bonnie ships, buried under fifteen fathom of quicksand and running water, winna waken and tell ye whose uncannie skill sunk them there, the simplest hind will whisper ye that Margery Forsythe kens mair about it than a God-fearing woman should. So ye see, Lord William Forster, I would even counsel ye to make yere presence scarce on this kittle coast — just wyse yersel warily owre the salt water again. And true-love's no like a new-killed kid in summer — it will keep, ye see; it will keep. This cross cummer will grow kindly, and we shall come snoring back in our barge, some bonnie moonlight summer night, and carry away my young lady with a

sweeping oar and a wetted sail. For if we persist when she resists, we shall have wet sarks and droukit hair. Sae ye laugh and listen not? Aweel, aweel, them that will to Couper will to Couper! — a doomed man's easily drowned! — the thing that maun be maun be! — and sic things shall be if we sell ale!'

"These predestinating exclamations were abridged by a long train of bridal guests hurrying from the hall to receive the bridegroom, who, disregarding all admonition, leaped gaily ashore, and was welcomed with trumpet flourish and the continued sound of the lowland pipe. He was followed by six of his seven mariners; I alone remained, overawed by the vision I had beheld on the preceding night, by the prophetic words of the sorceress of Siddick, and by that boding forecast of disaster, which the wise would do well to regard.

" On all sides people were seated on the rising grounds: the tree tops, the immemorial resting places of ravens and rooks,

were filled with young men, anxious to see the procession to the chapel of Preston, and to hearken the bridal joy; and even the rough and dizzy cliff of Barnhourie burn, which overlooks the Solway for many miles, had the possession of its summit disputed with its native cormorants and eagles, by some venturous schoolboys, who thus showed that love of adventure which belongs to the children of the sea-coast. The sun was in noon when we landed in Preston-bay, and its edge was touching the grassy tops of the western hills of Galloway, when shout above shout, from wood and eminence, the waving of white hands from field and knoll, and the sudden awakening of all manner of clamorous and mirthful melody, announced the coming of the bridal crowd. The gates of Preston Hall burst suddenly open; out upon the level lawn gushed an inundation of youths and maidens clad in their richest dresses, and the living stream flowed down to the Solway side. As they approached, a shallop, covered from the mast-head to the

water with streamers, and pennons, and garlands, came suddenly from a small anchorage scooped out of the bosom of the garden, making the coming tide gleam to a distance, with the gold and silver lavished in its decoration. But my admiration of this beautiful shallop was soon interrupted by the appearance of a lady, who, standing on the ground by the prow of the bride's barge, looked earnestly seaward, and trembled so much, that the white satin dress which covered her from bosom to heel, studded, and sown, and flowered with the most costly stones and metals, shook as if touched by an ungentle wind. Her long tresses, of raven black hair, and which, in the boast of maidenhood of my early days, descended till she could sit upon them, partook of her agitation. Her eyes alone, large and bright, and fringed with long lashes of a black still deeper than that of her hair, were calm and contemplative, and seemed with her mind meditating on some perilous thing. While she stood thus, a

maiden came to her side, and casting a long white veil, a present from the bridegroom, over her head, shrouded her to the feet; but the elegance of her form, and the deep dark glance of her expressive eyes, triumphed over the costly gift; — though the fringe was of diamonds, and the disastrous tale of the youth who perished swimming over the Solway to his love, was wrought, or rather damasked, in the middle. I could have gazed from that hour till this on this beautiful vision; but, while I looked, there came slowly from the wood a figure of a woman, bent with age or distress to the ground, and entirely covered in a black mantle: she approached the bride unperceived, and lay down at her feet — as a footstool on which she must tread before she could enter the shallop. This was unheeded of many, or of all; for the blessings showered by all ranks on the departing pair, — the bustle of the mariners preparing to sail with the tide, which now filled Preston-bay, the sounding of bugle and pipe, and the unremitting

rivalry in song and ballad, between the mariners in the barges of the bridegroom and bride, successively filled every mind, save mine, overclouded then, and as it has ever since been, before some coming calamity. Ballad and song passed over my memory without leaving a verse behind; one song alone, sung by a mariner of Allanbay, and which has long been popular on the coast, interested me much, — more, I confess, from the dark and mysterious manner in which it figured or shadowed forth our catastrophe, than from its poetical merit, the last verse alone approaching to the true tone of the lyric.

MICHAEL HALMER'S SONG.

1.

Upon the bonnie mountain side,
  Upon the leafy trees,
Upon the rich and golden fields,
  Upon the deep green seas,
The wind comes breathing freshly forth —
  Ho! pluck up from the sand
Our anchor, and go shooting as
  A wing'd shaft from the land!

The sheep love Skiddaw's lonesome top —
The shepherd loves his hill —
The throstle loves the budding bush —
Sweet woman loves her will —
The lark loves heaven for visiting,
But green earth for her home;
And I love the good ship, singing
Through the billows in their foam.

2.

My son, a grey-hair'd peasant said,
Leap on the grassy land,
And deeper than five fathom sink
Thine anchor in the sand;
And meek and humble make thy heart;
For ere yon bright'ning moon
Lifts her wond'rous lamp above the wave
Amid night's lonely noon,
There shall be shriekings heard at sea —
Lamentings heard ashore —
My son, go pluck thy main-sail down,
And tempt the heav'n no more.
Come forth and weep, come forth and pray,
Grey dame and hoary swain —
All ye who have got sons to-night
Upon the faithless main.

3.

And wherefore, old man, should I turn?
Dost hear the merry pipe,
The harvest bugle winding
Among Scotland's corn fields ripe?
And see her dark-eyed maidens dance,
Whose willing arms alway
Are open for the merry lads
Of bonnie Allanbay?
Full sore the old man sigh'd — and said,
Go bid the mountain wind
Breathe softer, and the deep waves hear
The prayers of frail mankind,
And mar the whirlwind in his might; —
His hoary head he shook,
Gazed on the youth, and on the sea,
And sadder wax'd his look.

4.

Lo! look! here comes our lovely bride —
Breathes there a wind so rude
As chafe the billows when she goes
In beauty o'er the flood?
The raven fleece that dances
On her round and swan-white neck;
The white foot that wakes music
On the smooth and shaven deck;

The white hand that goes waving thus,
As if it told the brine —
Be gentle in your ministry,
O'er you I rule and reign;
The eye that looks so lovely,
Yet so lofty in its sway—
Old man, the sea adores them —
So adieu, sweet Allanbay!

" During the continuance of this song, an old gentleman of the house of Maxwell, advancing through the press to the barges, said aloud — ' A challenge, ye gallants, a challenge! — let the bridegroom take his merry mariners of England — let the bride take her mariners of old Galloway — push the barges from Preston-bay, as the signal-pipe sounds; and a pipe of blood-red wine to a cupful of cold water, that *we* reach Allanbay first.' As the old man finished his challenge, hundreds of hats, and bonnets too, were thrown into the air, and the bridegroom, with a smile, took his offered hand and said, — ' What! Sir Marmaduke Maxwell, wilt thou brave us too? — A pipe of the richest wine to a drink of the saltest brine

in the centre of Solway, that the merry lads of Allanbay exceed thee at least by ten strokes of the oar.' The English mariners replied, as is their wont, with a shout, threw aside their jackets and caps, and prepared gladly for the coming contest: nor were the mariners of Siddick and Colvend slow in preparing; they made themselves ready with that silent and sedate alacrity peculiar to that singular people. 'May I never see Skiddaw again,' said William Selby of Derwent, 'nor taste Nancy Grogson's grog, or her pretty daughter's lips, if the fresh-water lads of Barnhourie surpass the salt-water lads of Allanbay.'

"'And for my part,' said Charles Carson, 'in answer to my comrade's vow, may I be turned into a sheldrake, and doomed to swim to doomsday in the lang black lake of Loughmaben, if the powkpuds of Skiddaw surpass the cannie lads of green Galloway.' And both parties, matched in numbers, in strength —of equal years, and of similar ability— stood with looks askance on each other,

ready to start, and willing to win the bridal boast, and the bride or bridegroom's favour.

"'And now, my sweet bride,' said Lord William, 'shall I help thee into thy barge? — Loth am I that thy kinsman's vaunt causes a brief separation. — Now guide thy barge wisely and warily,' said he to her helmsman, 'I would rather pay the wine for thy mistress ten thousand fold, than one lock of her raven hair should be put in jeopardy. — If thou bringest her harmless into Allanbay, I will give an hundred pieces of gold to thee and thy mates. — Shouldst thou peril her in thy folly, come before my face no more.'

"'Peril Beatrice Maxwell, Lord William!' said the Scottish helmsman, with a look of proud scorn, 'My fathers have fought to the saddle laps in English blood for the men of the house of Maxwell — and I would rather see all who own the sirname of Forster sinking in the Solway, without one to help them, than be the cause of the

fair maiden of Preston soiling slipper or snood. I see ye dinna ken the Howatsons of Glenhowan.'

"'I know nought of the Howatsons of Glenhowan,' said the bridegroom, 'but what I am proud and pleased with — therefore ply the oar, and manage the sail, for I have men with me who will put you to your might in both.'

"To this conciliating speech the maritime representative of the ancient Howatsons of Glenhowan returned no answer, but busying himself in his vocation, chanted, as was his wont on going upon any important mission, some fragments of an old ballad — made by one of the minstrels of the house of Maxwell, when its glory was at the fullest.

1.

"Give the sail to the south-wind, thou mariner bold,
Keep the vessel all stately and steady,
And sever the green grassy sward with her prow,
Where yon lances gleam level and ready."—

" An ominous star sits above the bright moon,
And the vessel goes faster and faster;
And see the changed planet, so lovely ev'n now,
Glows like blood, and betokens disaster."

2.

" The moon, thou coward churl — lo! see the swift shafts
All as fleet as the winter snow flying,
And hearken the war steed — he neighs in his strength,
And tramples the dead and the dying."
And the bark smote the ground, and ashore they all leapt
With war-shout, and pipe-note, and clangor
Of two-handed claymore and hauberk — and soon
Their foes they consumed in their anger.

3.

All on yon fair shore where the cowslips bloom thick,
And the sea-waves so brightly are leaping,
The sun saw in gladness — the moon saw in death
Three hundred proud Foresters sleeping:
And long shall the Cumberland damosels weep
Where the sweet Ellenwater is flowan,
The hour the gay lads of Helvellyn were slain
By Lord Maxwell and gallant Glenhowan.

" Ere the song had ceased, the bride proceeded to enter the barge, when she perceived at her feet a figure in a black mantle, and scarce refrained from shrieking. 'Margery, what wouldst thou with me, Margery?' she said; 'the cottage thou livest in I have given thee.'

" 'Worlds, wealth, and creature comforts, are no cares of mine,' said the old domestic of the house of Maxwell. 'I laid me down here, that ere Beatrice Maxwell departs with one of a doomed house she should step over my grey hairs. Have I not said — have I not prayed?'

" 'Margery, Margery,' said the bride, 'be silent, and be wise.'

" 'Are we to stand here, and listen to the idle words of a crazed menial?' said one of the house of Maxwell — 'aboard, ye gallants, aboard!' and placing the bride on deck, the barges, urged by oar and sail, darted out of the bay of Preston, while the shout and song of clamouring multitudes followed us far into the ocean.

"The wind of the summer twilight, gentle and dewy, went curling the surface of the water; before us the green mountains of Cumberland rose; behind us we beheld the huge outline of the Scottish hills, while, a full stonecast asunder, the barges pursued their way, and the crews, silent and anxious, had each their hopes of conquering in the contest. As we went scudding away, I looked toward the hall of Helvellyn, and there I beheld on its summit the old lord, with his gray hair — his hands clasped, and his eyes turned intent on the barge which contained his son. I thought on the prophecy, and on the vision of the preceding evening, and looked towards the hills of Scotland, now fast diminishing in the distance. At first I thought I saw the waters agitated in the track we had pursued, and continuing to gaze, I observed the sea furrowed into a tremendous hollow, following the sinuous course of the barge. I now knew this to be a whirlwind, and dreading that it would fasten on our sails, I tacked

northward — the whirlwind followed also. I tacked southward, and to the south veered the whirlwind, increasing in violence as it came. The last sight I beheld was the sea at our stern, whirling round in fearful undulations. The wind at once seized our sails, turned us thrice about, and down went the barge, headforemost, in the centre of Solway. I was stunned, and felt the cold brine bubbling in my ears, as emerging from the flood I tried to swim — barge, bridegroom, and mariners were all gone. The bride's barge came in a moment to my side, and saved me, and standing for the coast of Cumberland, spread the tale of sorrow along the shore, where crowds had assembled to welcome us. The old Lord of Helvellyn remained on the castle top, after he had witnessed the loss of his son; and when his favourite servant ventured to approach, he was found seated in his chair, his hands clasped more in resignation than agony, his face turned to the Solway, and his eyes gazing with the deepest intensity, and stiff

and dead. The morning tide threw the body of Lord William and those of his six mariners ashore: and when I walked down at day-dawn to the beach, I found them stretched in a row on the very spot where the vision had revealed their fate to me so darkly and so surely. Such a tale as this will be often told you among the sea-coast cottages of Cumberland — Young man, be wise, and weigh well the mysterious ways of Providence."

JUDITH MACRONE,

THE PROPHETESS.

" But I am haunted by a fearful shape —
Some hated thing which sharp fear forms of shadows;
Something which takes no known form, yet alarms
Me worse than my worst foeman arm'd in proof —
Something which haunts my slumbers — finds me out
In my deep dreams — in fiercest strife, when blood
Runs rife as rivulet water — in quiet peace
When rustic songs abound — in silent prayer,
For prayer, too, have I tried — still is it there —
Now — now — the dismal shadow stalks before me,
More visible than ever!"

THE whole course of Annanwater, in Dumfriesshire, is beautiful; from where it arises among the upland pastures, in the vicinity of the sources of the Clyde and the Tweed, and winding its way by old churchyard, decayed castle, Roman encampment, and battle-field, through fine natural groves, and well cultivated grounds, finally unites its waters with the sea of Solway, after conferring its name

on the pretty little borough of Annan. The interior of the district, it is true, presents a singular mixture of desolate nature and rich cultivation; but the immediate banks of the river itself are of a varied and romantic character. At every turn we take, we come to nooks of secluded and fairy beauty — groves of fine ancient trees, coeval with the ruined towers they embosom — clumps of the most beautiful holly, skirted with *rones*, or irregular rows of hazel, wild cherry, and wild plum, remains of military or feudal greatness, dismantled keeps or peels, and repeated vestiges of broad Roman roads and ample camps, with many of those massive and squat structures, vaulted, and secured with double iron doors, for the protection of cattle, in former times, from reavers and forayers. The river itself has attractions of its own: its inconsiderable waters are pure; and the pebbles may be numbered in the deepest pools, save when the stream is augmented by rains; and for the net, the liester,

and the fly-hook, it produces abundance of salmon, grilses, herlings, and trouts.

The peasantry are as varied in their character as the district they inhabit. Agriculture and pasturage claim an equal share in the pursuits of almost every individual; and they are distinguished from the people of many other lowland districts by superior strength, agility, and courage: the free mountain air, gentle labour, and variety of pursuits, give a health and activity which fit them for martial exercises; and they have, perhaps, more of a military air about them, than the inhabitants of any of the neighbouring vales. Many strange, romantic, and martial stories, linger among them; and those who have the good fortune to be admitted to their friendship, or their fireside, may have their condescension richly repaid by curious oral communications, in which history, true and fabulous, and poetry, and superstition, are strangely blended together. The tale of the spirit which for many gene-

rations has haunted the castle of Spedlans, will have its narrative of ordinary horror accompanied by fairy legends, and traditions more romantic in their origin, and more deeply steeped in the dews of superstition.

One fine September morning, for the combined purpose of angling, gathering nuts, and exploring the strong holds of the ancient heroes of Annandale — the Hallidays, the Jardines, the Carlyles, the Bells, and the Irvings,—I proceeded up the river bank, and employed my fish-rod with a success which drove me in despair to nut-gathering. It was past mid-day when I arrived at a fine bold sweep of the stream, where the shade of the bordering groves was invitingly cool, and the green sward fresh, soft, and untrodden. The sun was, to use the expression of a Scottish poet — "wading 'mang the mist," or as a fastidious Englishman would say, "struggling amid drizzly rain," which abated the heat of the luminary, and rendered the grass blade cool

and moist. A large oak tree or two, set down in the random beauty of nature, adorned the narrow holm, or bordering of green sward, between the wood and the water; while at the extremity of the walk, where the stream was limited by projecting rocks, stood the remains of one of those square peels, or towers of refuge, already alluded to. The building was roofless; and the walls had been lessened in their height by military violence; while from its interior ascended a thin blue smoke, which, curling away among the straight stems of the trees, escaped into the free air through the upper boughs of the grove. Between the tower and the river lay many webs of fine linen, bleaching on the grass; while from the ruin itself came the uninterrupted merriment of some country maidens — a singular medley of open laughter, fragments of song, and taunts about courtship, and sarcasms on the lack of lovers.

"Lads!" said a shrill voice, "I never

saw such soulless coofs — one would think we had ne'er a tooth in our heads, or a pair o' lips for the kissing."

"Kissing, indeed!" said another; "one would think our lips were made for nought save supping curds or crowdy, and that we were suspected of witchcraft. — Here we have been diddling in this den of woe and dool from blessed sun-rise, and deil a creature with hair on its lip has mistaken its road, and come near us. I think ancient spunk and glee be dead and gone from merry Annan-water."

"Ah, my bonnie lasses," interrupted an old woman, half choked with a church-yard cough, "I mind weel in the blessed year fifteen, we had a bonnie wenching in this very place — there was Jenny Bell, and Kate Bell, her cousin, who had a minister-tone at forty, and was made an honest woman at fifty-eight; and there was Bell Irving and me, — lads! we had the choice of the parish; ye might have heard the caressing o' our lips as far as the Wylie-

hole; and what would ye think — Pate Irving, now a douce man and a godly, was the wantonest of all. Ah, my bonnie kimmers, that was a night."

This description of departed joys seemed to infuse its spirit into the younger branches of the establishment; for while I pondered how I might introduce myself to these water-nymphs with discretion and humility, I observed a young rosy face, ornamented with a profusion of glistering nut-brown locks, projected past the porch, and reconnoitring me very steadfastly. A forehead with dark eyes and raven hair instantly assisted in the scrutiny; and presently the head of the ancient dame herself appeared, obtruded beyond them both — like Care looking out between Mirth and Joy, in a modern allegory. A tartan night-cap endeavoured in vain to restrain her matted and withered hair, which the comb had not for a long while sought to shed, or the scissars to abridge; her cheeks were channeled; and a pair of spectacles perched

on a nose something of the colour and shape of a lobster's claw, assisted her in drawing conclusions from the appearance of a stranger.

I heard the tittering and whispering of the maidens; but the voice of the old woman aspired to something more elevated than a whisper, and mingled counsel and scolding in equal quantities.

"A fisher, indeed!" responded the sibyl to the queries of one of her greener companions — "and what's he come to fish? a snow-white web from the bottom of our cauldron?—Aye, aye, 'cause he has ae handsome leg, and something of a merry ee—mind ye, I say na twa — ye christen his calling honest. He's a long black fallow with a tinker look, and I'll warrant there's no his marrow from Longtown to Lochmaben, for robbing hen-roosts; and yet I shouldna wonder, Mysie Dinwoodie, if ye held tryst with that strange lad for a whole night, with no witness save the blessed moon."

"Hout now, Prudence Caird," said the fair-haired girl, "ye are thinking on the mistake ye made with Pate Johnstone, of Dargavel — and how ye failed to mend it with Dick Bell o' Cowfloshan."

The secret history of the old woman's unhappy loves was interrupted by the appearance of a very handsome girl, who, bearing refreshments for her menials, glided through the grove, with a foot so light and white — a look so sweet — a high white forehead, shaded with locks clustering over the temples — and with eyes so large, so bright, and blue,—that she seemed a personification of the shepherd maidens of Scottish song. Two fine moorland dogs accompanied her: they sat as she sat, stood as she stood, and moved as she moved. She withdrew from her companions, and approached where I stood, with a look at once so sweet and demure, that, trespasser as I imagined myself to be, I was emboldened to abide a rebuke, which I hoped would come softened from such sweet lips.

Though apparently examining the progress of her linen towards perfect whiteness, and approaching me rather by a sidelong than a direct step, I observed, by a quick glance of her eye, that I was included in her calculations. I was saved the confusion which a bashful person feels in addressing a stranger, by a voice from the river bank, which, ascending from a small knoll of green willows, sang with singular wildness some snatches of an old ballad.

1.

O Annan runs smoothly atween its green banks,
The ear may scarce listen its flowing:
Ye may see 'tween the ranks of the lofty green trees
The golden harvest glowing;
And hear the horn wound — see the husbandman's bands
Fall on with their sharp sickles bright in their hands.

2.

I have seen by thy deep and romantic stream
The sword of the warrior flashing;

I have seen through thy deep and thy crystal stream
The barbed war steeds dashing:
There grows not a green tree — there stands not a stone,
But the fall of the valiant and noble has known.

When the song ceased, I observed two hands shedding apart the thick willows, while an eye glanced for a moment through the aperture, on the young maiden and me. A song of a gentler nature instantly followed — and I could not help imagining, that my companion felt a particular interest in the minstrel's story. The time and the place contributed to the charm of the sweet voice, and the rustic poetry.

BONNIE MARY HALLIDAY.

1.

Bonnie Mary Halliday,
Turn again, I call you;
If you go to the dewy wood,
Sorrow will befall you:

The ringdove from the dewy wood
Is wailing sore, and calling;
And Annan-water, 'tween its banks,
Is foaming far and falling.

2.

Gentle Mary Halliday,
Come, my bonnie lady;
Upon the river's woody bank
My steed is saddled ready;
And for thy haughty kinsmen's threats,
My faith shall never falter;
The bridal banquet 's ready made,
The priest is at the altar.

3.

Gentle Mary Halliday,
The towers of merry Preston
Have bridal candles gleaming bright,
So busk thee, love, and hasten;
Come, busk thee, love, and bowne thee
Through Tinwald and green Mouswal;
Come, be the grace and be the charm
To the proud towers of Machusel.

4.

Bonnie Mary Halliday,
Turn again, I tell you:
For wit, an' grace, an' loveliness,
What maidens may excel you?
Though Annan has its beauteous dames,
And Corrie many a fair one,
We canna want thee from our sight,
Thou lovely and thou rare one.

5.

Bonnie Mary Halliday,
When the cittern's sounding,
We'll miss thy lightsome lily foot,
Amang the blythe lads bounding;
The summer sun shall freeze our veins,
The winter moon shall warm us,
Ere the like of thee shall come again,
To cheer us and to charm us.

During the song, I walked unconsciously down to the river bank, and stood on a small promontory which projected into the stream; it was bordered with willows and

wild flowers, and the summit, nibbled by some pet sheep, was as smooth as the softest velvet. Here I obtained a full view of this singular songstress. She was seated among the willows, on the indented bank, with her bare feet in the stream: a slouched straw hat, filled with withered flowers and black-cock and peacock feathers, lay at her side; and its removal allowed a fine fleece of hazel-coloured hair to fall down on all sides, till it curled on the grass. She wore a boddice of green tarnished silk; her lower garments were kilted in the thrifty fashion of the country maidens of Caledonia; and round her neck and arm she wore — as much, it is true, for a charm, as an ornament — several bracelets of the hard, round, and bitter berries of the mountain-ash, or witch-tree.

"It is poor Judith Macrone, Sir," said the maiden, who with the privilege of a listener had come close to my side: "She has found her bed in the wild woods for

some weeks, living on nuts and plums: I wish the poor demented maiden would come and taste some of my curds and cream."

Judith rose suddenly from her seat, and scattering some handfuls of wild flowers in the stream, exclaimed with something of a scream of recognition: "Aha, bonnie Mary Halliday, lass, ye wear the snood of singleness yet, for a' yere gentle blood and yere weel-filled farms. But wha's this ye have got with ye? May I love to lie on wet straw wi' a cold sack above me, if it is not Francis Forster, all the way from bonnie Derwentwater. Alake, my bonnie lass, for such a wooer! He could nae say seven words of saft, sappy, loving Scotch t'ye, did every word bring for its dower the bonnie lands of Lochwood, which your forefathers lost. No, no — Mary Halliday, take a bonnie Annan-water lad, and let the Southron gang."

1.

There's bonnie lads on fairy Nith,
And cannie lads on Dee,
And stately lads on Kinnel side,
And by Dalgonar tree;
The Nithsdale lads are frank and kind,
But lack the bright blue ee
Of the bonnie Annanwater lads,
The wale of lads for me.

2.

There's Willie Watson of Witchstone,
Dick Irving of Gowktree,
Frank Forest of the Houlet-ha,
Jock Bell of Lillylea;
But give to me a Halliday,
The witty, bauld, and free,
The frackest lads of Annanbank,
The Hallidays for me.

3.

The Johnstone is a noble name,
The Jardine is a free,
The Bells are bauld, the Irvings good,
The Carlyles bear the gree,
Till the gallant Hallidays come in
With minstrel, mirth, and glee,
Then hey! the lads of Annanbank,
The Hallidays for me.

This old rude rhyme was sung with considerable archness and effect: the song-stress then came towards the place where we stood, not with a regular direct step, but a sidelong hop and skip, waving, as she came, her bonnet and feathers from side to side, accompanying every motion with a line of an old song. Old Prudence Caird seemed scandalized at the extravagant demeanour of the poor girl; and advancing towards her, waving her hands to be gone, exclaimed,

"In the name of all aboon, what are ye skipping and skirling there for, ye born gowk and sworn gomeral? Ye'll fall belly-flaught, breadth and length, on the lily-white linen that has cost such a cleansing. Away to the woods like another gowk — away — else I'se kirsen ye with a cupful of scalding water — my sooth shall I;" and partly suiting the action to the word, she came forward with a cupful of water in her hand.

The singular person to whom these bitter words were addressed, heard them with a

loud laugh of utter contempt and scorn; and with a thousand fantastic twirls and freaks, she threaded, with great dexterity, the whole maze of linen webs, and confronted old Prudence. She looked her full in the face — she eyed her on one side, and eyed her on another, — she stooped down, and she stood on tiptoe, examining her all the while with an eye of simple, but crafty scrutiny.

"Protect us, Sirs!" said the wandering maiden, "what wicked liars these two blue een o' mine are — I'll ne'er credit them again — and yet, believe me, but it's like her. — Hech be't, she's sore changed since that merry time — it cannot be her. — Harkee, my douce decent-looking dame, d'ye ken if Prudence Caird be living yet?"

"And what hast thou to say to Prudence Caird?" said the old woman, growing blacker with anger, and clutching, as she spoke, the long sharp fingers of her right hand, portending hostility to the blue eyes of Judith.

"Say to Prudence Caird?" said the maiden — "a bonnie question, indeed! — what advice could a poor bewildered creature like me give to a douce person, who has had twice the benefit of the counsel of the minister and kirk session?"

And, with unexpected agility, away Judith danced and leaped, and laughed, eluding the indignation of her less active antagonist.

I could not help feeling anxious to learn something of the history of Judith; and while I was expressing this to Mary Halliday, the poor girl approached and received a bowl of curds and cream, which she acknowledged with abundance of fantastic bows and becks.

"Look at her now," said my companion, "but say not a word."

Judith seated herself on the margin of the river; and throwing a spoonful of the curds into the stream, said, "There, taste that, thou sweet and gentle water, — and when I bathe my burning brow in thy flood, or wade through thee, and through

thee, on the warm moon-light evenings of summer, mind who fed yere bonnie mottled trouts, and yere lang silver eels, and no drown me as ye did my bonnie sister Peggy, and her young bridegroom." In a small thicket beside her, a bird or two, confiding in the harmlessness of a creature with whom they were well acquainted, continued to pour forth their uninterrupted strain of song. "Ye wee daft things," said Judith, changing from a tone of sadness to one of the most giddy gaiety, "What sit ye lilting there for, on the broad green bough — wasting yere sweetest songs on a fool quean like me, — but ye shall not go unrewarded." So saying, she scattered a spoonful of curds beside her on the grass, and said, with some abatement of her mirth — "Come, and peckle at my hand, my poor feathered innocents — ilka bird of the forest, save the raven and the hooded crow, is a sister to me." A redbreast, as she spoke, with an audacity which that lover of the human face seldom dis-

plays, save when the snow is on the ground, came boldly to her elbow, and began to obey her invitation. "Aha, Rabin, my red-bosomed lover, are ye there? Ye'll find me stiff and streekit under the green-wood bough some morning, and ye mauna stint to deck me out daintily with green leaves, my bonnie man:" and throwing the bird some more curds, she proceeded to sup the remainder herself, indulging between every mouthful in much bewildered talk.

The interest I took in the poor girl — a few handfuls of nuts,—and, above all, a few pleasant glances from one, who (though old, and bent, and withered now) was once twenty-one, had a handsome leg, and mirth in his eye, — obtained me the good graces of the nymphs of Annan-water. Our conversation turned upon poor Judith Macrone.

"She is a poor innocent," said Mary Halliday, "as wild and as harmless as the birds she is feeding. She was ever

a singular girl, and wit and folly seem to keep alternate sway over her mind."

"She an innocent!" said Prudence Caird; "she's a cunning and a crafty quean, with a wicked memory, and a malicious tongue. It sets her weel to wag her fool tongue at me, and say a word that is nae to my credit."

"Hoot, toot, woman," said one of the fair-haired menials; "we can scarce keep our balance with all the wit we have — what can ye expect o' such an addercap as crazy Jude? But of all the queans of Annan-bank, she is the quean for old-world stories. Set her on a sunny hill-side — give her her own will — and, wise or daft, who likes na that?—and she'll clatter ye into a dead sleep, with tales of spirits and apparitions, and the dead who have not peace in the grave, and walk the earth for a season. I heard douce John Stroudwater, the Cameronian elder, say, that assuredly an evil spirit has filled her head with fool songs, and queer lang-sin-syne

ballads, by and attour a foreknowledge of coming evil. It's well known that she foretold the drowning of her sister and her bridegroom, in that black pool before us, where poor Jude now sits so sorrowful."

"Troth and atweel, and that's too true," said Prudence Caird, "and I was unwise to grow cankered with such a kittle customer. She tried my patience sore, but I never heard of any one's luck who crossed her — that one never did good that she wished harm to yet, — I hope she'll wish no kittle wish to me."

"I know not," said Mary Halliday, with more than ordinary gravity, and in a tone something between hesitation and belief, "I know not how Judith is informed of evil fortune; but her foreknowledge of human calamity, whether it comes from a good or an evil source, is of no use but to be wondered at, and, perhaps, sorrowed for. What is foredoomed will surely come to pass, and cannot be guarded against; and, therefore, I deem all warning of the

event to be vain and useless. But touching her skill in minstrel lore—with her, each oak-tree has its tale, each loop of Annan-water its tradition, and every green knowe or holly-bush, its ballad of true love, or song of knightly bravery."

"But the story of her sister's bridal," said one of the menials, "is the best of all the tales told of idle Jude—it is said to be sorrowful—ye may pick sorrow out of aught, as weel as ye may pick mirth; and some cry for what others laugh at—but I know this, that lang Tam Southeran-airn, the tinker, told me, that save the drowning of the bride and bridegroom in the mirkest pool of Annan-water, shame fall of aught saw he to sorrow for; and he would not have such a duck again as he had that blessed night, for all the tup-horns of Dryfesdale, and the heads they grow upon."

"I had better, without farther clipping and cutting of the bridal tale, relate it

at once," said Mary Halliday; "it is a strange story, and soon told. The marriage of Margaret, the sister of Judith, happened in the very lap of winter — the snow lay deep on the ground — the ice was thick on the river, and the wheel of her father's mill had not turned round for full forty days. The bride was a sweet, and a kind-hearted, beautiful girl; and there was not a cleverer lad than her bridegroom, David Carlyle, from the head to the foot of Annan-water. I heard the minister of the parish say, after he had joined their hands together, that fifty years he had been a marrier of loving hearts, but he had never married a fairer pair. The bridegroom's mother was a proud dame, of the ancient house of Morison, — she took it sore to heart that her son should marry a miller's daughter; she forbade him, under pain of the mother's curse — and a woman's curse, they say, is a sore one — to bed with his bride under

a churl's roof-tree; and as he wished to be happy, to bring her home to his father's house on the night of the wedding.

"Now, ye will consider that the house of the bride stood on one hill side, and the home of the bridegroom on another; while between them, in the bosom of the valley, lay no less a water than the Annan, with its bank knee-deep in snow, and its surface plated with ice. The mirk winter night and the mother's scorn did not prevent one of the blythesomest bridals from taking place that ever a piper played to, or a maiden danced in. Ye have never seen, Sir, one of our inland merry-makings, and seen the lads and the lasses moving merrily to the sound of the fiddle and the harpstring, else ye might have some notion of the mirth at Margaret's bridal. The young were loudest in their joy, but the old were blyther at the heart; and men forgot their white heads, and women that they were grandames — and who so glad as they? An old man, one of the frank-hearted Bells of Middlebee,

wiped his brow, as he sat down from a reel, and said, 'Aweel, Mary, my bonnie lass, there are just three things which intoxicate the heart of man: first, there is strong drink; secondly, there is music; and, thirdly, there is the company of beautiful women, when they move to the sound of dulcimer and flute: blest be the Maker, for they are the most wonderful of all his works.'

"But the merriest, as well as the fairest, was the bride herself; she danced with unequalled life and grace — her feet gave the tone, rather than took it from the fiddle; and the old men said, the melody of her feet, as they moved on the floor, would do more mischief among men's hearts than her eyes, and her eyes were wondrous bright ones. Many stayed from dancing themselves, and stood in a circle round the place where she danced. I listened to their remarks, which the catastrophe of the evening impressed on my memory. — 'I think,' said William Johnstone of Chapelknowe, 'our bonnie bride's possest — I never saw her look so

sweet, or dance so delightfully — It's no sonsie to look so smiling on her wedding-night — a grave bride's best — owre blythe a bride is seldom a blest one.' — 'There's no a sweeter or more modest maid on Annan-bank,' said John Stroudwater, the Cameronian — who, scorning to mingle in the dance himself, yet could endure to be a witness of youthful folly where the liquor was plenty — 'she's a bonnie quean; yet I cannot say I like to see the light which comes from her eyes, as if it were shed from two stars; nor love I to hearken the vain and wanton sound which she causeth the planed floor to utter, as she directeth her steps to the strange outcry of that man's instrument of wood — called by the profane a fiddle.' Nor were the women without their remarks on the bride's mirth on this unhappy night. 'I protest,' said an old dame, in a black hood, 'against all this profane minstrelsy and dancing — it is more sinful in its nature than strong drink — I wish good may come of it!' and she paused to moisten her lips

with a cup of brandy, to which a piece of sugar, and a single tea-spoonful of water had communicated the lady-like name of cordial. — 'I wish, I say, good may come of it — I have not danced these thirty years and three; but the bride is dancing as if this night was her last. I fear she is fey.'

"If the bride and bridegroom were blythe, there was another sad enough — even poor Judith, who, retiring from the mirth and the dancing, went to her father's mill-door, and seating herself on a broken millstone, and loosing her locks from the comb, let them fall like a shroud around her, while she gazed intent and silent upon Annan-water, which lay still and clear in the setting light of the moon. I had an early regard for this unhappy maid — we were school-fellows, and play-fellows; and though her temper was wayward, — and her mind, equal to the hardest task one week, was unequal for any kind of learning another; yet, from the frequency of these remarkable fits of impulse and ability, she became one

of the finest scholars in Annandale. So I went out into the open air, and found her sitting silent and melancholy, and looking with a fixed and undeviating gaze on the river, which glittered a good half mile distant. I stood beside her, and sought rather to learn what oppressed her spirit, from her actions and her looks, than by questioning her. It has been remarked, that on ordinary occasions, though she is talkative, and fond of singing snatches of songs, yet, when the secret of any coming calamity is communicated to her spirit, she becomes at once silent and gloomy, and seeks to acquaint mankind with the disaster awaiting them, by sensible signs and tokens — a kind of hieroglyphic mode of communication which she has invented to avoid the misery, perhaps, of open speech. She seemed scarcely aware of my presence.

"At last she threw back her long hair from her face, that nothing might intercept her steady gaze at the river; and plucking a silver bodkin from her bosom, she pro-

ceeded to describe on the ground two small and coffin-shaped holes — one something longer than the other. I could not help shuddering while I looked on these symbols of certain fate; and my fears instantly connected what I saw with the wedding, and the bride and bridegroom. I seized her by the arm, and snatching the bodkin from her, said, 'Judith, thou art an evil foreboder, and I shall cast this bodkin of thine, which has been made under no good influence, into the blackest pool of Annanwater.' — At other times I was an overmatch for her in strength; but when the time of her sorrow came, she seemed to obtain supernatural strength in body as well as in mind; and on this occasion she proved it by leaping swiftly to her feet, and wresting the bodkin from me. She resumed her seat; and taking the bride and bridegroom's ribands from her bosom, she put the latter into the larger grave, and the former in the less, and wrung her hands, threw her hair wildly over her face, and wept and sobbed aloud.

"All this had not passed unobserved of others. 'Mercy on us!' cried the laird of Gooseplat, 'but the young witch is casting cantraips, and making the figures of graves, and dooming to the bedral's spade, and the parish mortcloth, the quick instead of the dead. I'se tell thee what, my cannie lass, two red peats and a tar-barrel would make a warm conclusion to these unsonsie spells ye are casting — and may I be choked with a thimbleful of brandy, if ye should want a cross on the brow as deep as the bone, if I had my whittle.' — Other spectators came to more charitable conclusions. 'Red peats and sharp whittles!' muttered William Graeme of Cummerlair, 'I'se tell ye what, laird, if ye lay a hand of harm on the poor demented lassie, I'se lend ye a Lockerby lick to take home with ye. — Eh, Sirs, but this be fearful to look upon — she is showing us by dumb looks, and sure nods, and sad signs, and awful symbols, the coming of wrath and woe. There are two graves, and

the bridal ribands laid like corses in them—he that runs may read.'

"While this passed out of doors, the dancing and bridal mirth abounded more than ever. It was now ten o'clock; and as the bridal chamber lay a mile distant, the bride and bridegroom prepared to depart, accompanied by a sure friend or two, to witness the conclusion of the marriage. 'Let them go,' said more voices than one; 'we shall make the fiddle-strings chirp, and shake our legs, till the small hours of the morning. Come, Tom Macthairm, play us up something wily and wanton: who can leap rafter-high to a sorrowful psalm tune like that?' The fiddler complied, and wall and rafter quivered and shook to the reviving merriment. The young couple now stood on the threshold, and looked towards their future habitation, in which the lights of preparation were shining. — 'An' I were you, bridegroom,' said one adviser, 'I would go by the bridge — I have heard oftener

than once to-night the soughing of the west wind, and the roaring of the linns — the Annan is a fair water in summer-time, but I would not trust such a bonnie lass as the bride on its fickle bosom on a winter night.' — 'An' I were you, bridegroom,' said another counsellor, 'I would lippen to the old proverb. The nearest road to the bride's bed's the best; the bosom of the Annan-water is bound in ice as hard and as firm as iron — ye might drive Burnswark-hill over its deepest pools, providing it had four feet. So dauner away down the edge of the wood, and cross at the Deadman's-plump — and if ye give me a shout, and the bride a kiss, when ye cross over't, it will give pleasure to us both.'

"The bride herself came forward, to bid farewell to her sister, not unconscious that the time of sorrow had come over her spirit, and that whispers of the import of her predictions were circulated among the bridal guests. She stood before Judith with a

cheek flushed with dancing, and parting benedictions from rustic lips, and her eyes gleaming with a wild and unusual light — which has often since been noticed by the tellers of her melancholy tale, as a light too unlike that of earthly eyes to be given for her good. 'Graves!' said the bride, with a laugh, which had something of a shriek in it, 'is this all you have as an apology for your fear? — where's your sight, if your senses be wandering? — My sister has only made the bridal beds, and strewed them with bridal favours.' She turned round to depart — Judith uttered a piercing shriek, and throwing her arms about her sister, clung to her, giving one convulsive sob after another; and, finally, throwing herself between her and the river, strove, but still strove in silence, to impress her with a sense of danger. It was in vain: the bride and bridegroom departed; while Judith, covering or rather shrouding herself in her mantle, and turning her face from the river, sat as

mute and as still as a statue; a slight convulsive shudder was from time to time visible.

"The young pair reached the Annan, and attempted to pass over the pool called the Deadman's-plump; the dancing and merriment, which had sustained a brief remission, had recommenced, when, far above the din of the dance and the music, one shriek, and then another, was heard in the direction of the river. 'Hearken the shout!' said one rustic; 'the bridegroom is fairly over the water now — then, hey, play up the runaway bride.' — 'Alas!' answered another peasant, 'yon is not the cry of pleasure, but the shriek of agony — my kale-yard to the Johnstone's land, but they are fallen into the Deadman's-plump, and Judith's prophecy 's true.' The hall-door seemed much too narrow for the multitude who rushed to get out. The shrieks were repeated; and, mingling with the shrieks, and at last o'er-mastering them, was heard the downward dash of Annan-water, which,

swollen suddenly with distant rains, descended from the hills with all its increase of waters, lifting the ice before it, and heaving it on the banks with a crash that resounded far and wide. The unhappy pair were seen struggling together against the overpowering element, which, encumbered with ice and trees, filled the channel from bank to bank, and rushed down six feet deep abreast. No effort could be made to save them; and when the river subsided in the morning, they were found in a distant eddy, the bridegroom's left hand round his bride's waist, and his right hand held out like one in the act of swimming. They lie buried together in the old kirk-yard of Dryfesdale. I have often seen Judith sitting weeping on their grave."

THE GHOST

WITH THE

GOLDEN CASKET.

"Is my soul tamed
And baby-rid with the thought that flood or field
Can render back, to scare men and the moon,
The airy shapes of the corses they enwomb?
And what if 'tis so—shall I lose the crown
Of my most golden hope, 'cause its fair circle
Is haunted by a shadow?"

FROM the coast of Cumberland the beautiful old castle of Caerlaverock is seen standing on the point of a fine green promontory, bounded by the river Nith on one side, by the deep sea on another, by the almost impassable morass of Solway on a third; while, far beyond, you observe the three spires of Dumfries, and the high green hills of Dalswinton and Keir. It was formerly the residence of the almost princely names of Douglas, Seaton, Kirk-

patrick, and Maxwell: it is now the dwelling-place of the hawk and the owl; its courts are a lair for cattle; and its walls afford a midnight shelter to the passing smuggler; or, like those of the city doomed in Scripture, are places for the fishermen to dry their nets. Between this fine old ruin and the banks of the Nith, at the foot of a grove of pines, and within a stone-cast of tide-mark, the remains of a rude cottage are yet visible to the curious eye; the bramble and the wild plum have in vain tried to triumph over the huge, grey granite blocks, which composed the foundations of its walls. The vestiges of a small garden may still be traced, more particularly in summer, when roses and lilies, and other relics of its former beauty, begin to open their bloom, clinging, amid the neglect and desolation of the place, with something like human affection, to the soil. This rustic ruin presents no attractions to the eye of the profound antiquary, compared to those of its more

stately companion, Caerlaverock Castle; but with this rude cottage and its garden tradition connects a tale so wild and so moving, as to elevate it, in the contemplation of the peasantry, above all the princely feasts and feudal atrocities of its neighbour.

It is now some fifty years since I visited the parish of Caerlaverock; but the memory of its people, its scenery, and the story of the Ghost with the Golden Casket, are as fresh with me as matters of yesterday. I had walked out to the river bank one sweet afternoon of July, when the fishermen were hastening to dip their nets in the coming tide, and the broad waters of the Solway sea were swelling and leaping against bank and cliff, as far as the eye could reach. It was studded over with boats, and its more unfrequented bays were white with water-fowl. I sat down on a small grassy mound between the cottage ruins and the old garden plat, and gazed, with all the hitherto untasted plea-

sure of a stranger, on the beautiful scene before me. On the right, and beyond the river, the mouldering relics of the ancient religion of Scotland ascended, in unassimilating beauty, above the humble kirk of New-Abbey and its squalid village; farther to the south rose the white sharp cliffs of Barnhourie,—while on the left stood the ancient keeps of Cumlongan, and Torthorald, and the Castle of Caerlaverock. Over the whole looked the stately green mountain of Criffel, confronting its more stately but less beautiful neighbour, Skiddaw; while between them flowed the deep wide sea of Solway, hemmed with cliff, and castle, and town.

As I sat looking on the increasing multitudes of waters, and watching the success of the fishermen, I became aware of the approach of an old man, leading, as one will conduct a dog in a string, a fine young milch cow, in a halter of twisted hair, which passing through the ends of two pieces of flat wood, fitted to the animal's

cheek-bones, pressed her nose, and gave her great pain whenever she became disobedient. The cow seemed willing to enjoy the luxury of a browze on the rich pasture which surrounded the little ruined cottage; but in this humble wish she was not to be indulged, for the aged owner, coiling up the tether, and seizing her closely by the head, conducted her past the tempting herbage, towards a small and close-cropt hillock, a good stone-cast distant. In this piece of self-denial the animal seemed reluctant to sympathize — she snuffed the fresh green pasture, and plunged, and startled, and nearly broke away. What the old man's strength seemed nearly unequal to, was accomplished by speech: —

"Bonnie lady, bonnie lady," said he, in a soothing tone, "it canna be, it mauna be — hinnie! hinnie! what would become of my three bonnie grand-bairns, made fatherless and mitherless by that false flood afore us, if they supped milk, and tasted

butter, that came from the greensward of this doomed and unblessed spot?"

The animal appeared to comprehend something in her own way from the speech of her owner: she abated her resistance; and indulging only in a passing glance at the rich deep herbage, passed on to her destined pasture.

I had often heard of the singular superstitions of the Scottish peasantry, and that every hillock had its song, every hill its ballad, and every valley its tale. I followed with my eye the old man and his cow; he went but a little way, till, seating himself on the ground, retaining still the tether in his hand, he said, "Now, bonnie lady, feast thy fill on this good greensward — it is halesome and holy, compared to the sward at the doomed cottage of auld Gibbie Gyrape — leave that to smugglers' nags: Willie o' Brandyburn and Roaring Jock o' Kempstane will ca' the haunted ha' a hained bit — they are godless fear-

noughts." I looked at the person of the peasant: he was a stout hale old man, with a weather-beaten face, furrowed something by time, and, perhaps, by sorrow. Though summer was at its warmest, he wore a broad chequered mantle, fastened at the bosom with a skewer of steel, — a broad bonnet, from beneath the circumference of which straggled a few thin locks, as white as driven snow, shining like amber, and softer than the finest flax, — while his legs were warmly cased in blue-ribbed boot-hose. Having laid his charge to the grass, he looked leisurely around him, and espying me — a stranger, and dressed above the manner of the peasantry, he acknowledged my presence by touching his bonnet; and, as if willing to communicate something of importance, he struck the tether stake in the ground, and came to the old garden fence.

Wishing to know the peasant's reasons for avoiding the ruins, I thus addressed him: — "This is a pretty spot, my aged

friend, and the herbage looks so fresh and abundant, that I would advise thee to bring thy charge hither; and while she continued to browze, I would gladly listen to the history of thy white locks, for they seem to have been bleached in many tempests."

"Aye, aye," said the peasant, shaking his white head with a grave smile, "they have braved sundry tempests between sixteen and sixty; but, touching this pasture, Sir, I know nobody who would like their cows to crop it, — the aged cattle shun the place, — the bushes bloom, but bear no fruit, — the birds never build in the branches, — the children never come near to play, — and the aged never choose it for a resting-place; but pointing it out, as they pass, to the young, tell them the story of its desolation. Sae ye see, Sir, having nae good will to such a spot of earth myself, I like little to see a stranger sitting in such an unblessed place; and I would as good as advise ye to come owre with me to the cowslip knoll, — there

are reasons mony that an honest man should nae sit there."

I arose at once, and seating myself beside the peasant, on the cowslip knoll, desired to know something of the history of the spot from which he had just warned me. The Caledonian looked on me with an air of embarrassment.

"I am just thinking," said he, "that as ye are an Englishman, I should nae acquaint ye with such a story. Ye'll make it, I'm doubting, a matter of reproach and vaunt, when ye gae hame, how Willie Borlan o' Caerlaverock told ye a tale of Scottish iniquity, that cowed all the stories in Southron book or history."

This unexpected obstacle was soon removed. "My sage and considerate friend," I said, "I have the blood in my bosom will keep me from revealing such a tale to the scoffer and scorner. I am something of a Caerlaverock man — the grandson of Marion Stobie of Dookdub."

The peasant seized my hand — "Marion

Stobie! bonnie Marion Stobie o' Dookdub — whom I wooed sae sair, and loved sae lang! — Man, I love ye for her sake; and well was it for her braw English bridegroom, that William Borlan — frail and faded now, but strong and in manhood then — was a thousand miles from Caerlaverock, rolling on the salt sea, when she was brided: — ye have the glance of her ee, — I could ken 't yet amang ten thousand, grey as my head is. I will tell the grandson of bonnie Marion Stobie ony tale he likes to ask for; and the Story of the Ghost and the Gowd Casket shall be foremost.

" You may imagine, then," said the old Caerlaverock peasant, rising at once with the commencement of his story from his native dialect into very passable English —" you may imagine these ruined walls raised again in their beauty — whitened, and covered with a coating of green broom; that garden, now desolate, filled with herbs in their season, and with flowers, hemmed

round with a fence of cherry and plum-trees; and the whole possessed by a young fisherman, who won a fair subsistence for his wife and children from the waters of the Solway sea: you may imagine it, too, as far from the present time as fifty years. There are only two persons living now, who remember when the Bonne-Homme-Richard, the first ship ever Richard Faulder commanded, was wrecked on the Pellock sand, — one of these persons now addresses you — the other is the fisherman who once owned that cottage, — whose name ought never to be named, and whose life seems lengthened as a warning to the earth, how fierce God's judgments are. Life changes — all breathing things have their time and their season; but the Solway flows in the same beauty — Criffel rises in the same majesty — the light of morning comes, and the full moon arises now, as they did then;— but this moralizing matters little. It was about the middle of harvest — I remember the day well — it had been sultry and suf-

focating, accompanied by rushings of wind, sudden convulsions of the water, and cloudings of the sun: — I heard my father sigh, and say, 'Dool — dool to them found on the deep sea to-night — there will happen strong storm and fearful tempest.' The day closed, and the moon came over Skiddaw: all was perfectly clear and still — frequent dashings and whirling agitations of the sea were soon heard mingling with the hasty clang of the water-fowls' wings, as they forsook the waves, and sought shelter among the hollows of the rocks. The storm was nigh. The sky darkened down at once — clap after clap of thunder followed—and lightning flashed so vividly, and so frequent, that the wide and agitated expanse of Solway was visible from side to side — from St. Bees to Barnhourie. A very heavy rain, mingled with hail, succeeded; and a wind accompanied it, so fierce, and so high, that the white foam of the sea was showered as thick as snow on the summit of Caerlaverock Castle.

"Through this perilous sea, and amid this darkness and tempest, a bark was observed coming swiftly down the middle of the sea; her sails rent, and her decks crowded with people. The carry, as it is called, of the tempest, was direct from St. Bees to Caerlaverock; and experienced swains could see that the bark would be driven full on the fatal shoals of the Scottish side; but the lightning was so fierce that few dared venture to look on the approaching vessel, or take measures for endeavouring to preserve the lives of the unfortunate mariners. My father stood on the threshold of his door, and beheld all that passed in the bosom of the sea. The bark approached fast—her canvass rent to threads, her masts nearly levelled with the deck, and the sea foaming over her so deep, and so strong, as to threaten to sweep the remains of her crew from the little refuge the broken masts and splintered beams still afforded them. She now seemed within half a mile of the shore, when a strong flash of lightning, that appeared to hang over the bark

for a moment, showed the figure of a lady, richly dressed, clinging to a youth who was pressing her to his bosom. My father exclaimed, 'Saddle me my black horse, and saddle me my grey, and bring them down to the Dead-man's bank,'—and, swift in action as he was in resolve, he hastened to the shore, his servants following with his horses. The shore of Solway presented then, as it does now, the same varying line of coast; and the house of my father stood in the bosom of a little bay, nearly a mile from where we sit. The remains of an old forest interposed between the bay at Dead-man's bank, and the bay at our feet; and mariners had learnt to wish, that if it were their doom to be wrecked, it might be in the bay of douce William Borlan, rather than that of Gilbert Gyrape, the proprietor of that ruined cottage. But human wishes are vanities, wished either by sea or land. I have heard my father say he could never forget the cries of the mariners, as the bark smote on the Pellock-bank, and the flood rushed through

the chasms made by the concussion; but he would far less forget the agony of a lady — the loveliest that could be looked upon, and the calm and affectionate courage of the young man who supported her, and endeavoured to save her from destruction. Richard Faulder, the only man who survived, has often sat at my fire-side, and sung me a very rude, but a very moving ballad, which he made on this young and unhappy pair; and the old mariner assured me he had only added rhymes, and a descriptive line or two, to the language in which Sir William Musgrave endeavoured to soothe and support his wife."

It seemed a thing truly singular, that at this very moment two young fishermen, who sat on the margin of the sea below us, watching their halve-nets, should sing, and with much sweetness, the very song the old man had described. They warbled verse and verse alternately—and

rock and bay seemed to retain and then release the sound. Nothing is so sweet as a song by the sea-side on a tranquil evening.

SIR WILLIAM MUSGRAVE.

First Fisherman.

" O lady, lady, why do you weep?
Though the wind be loos'd on the raging deep,
Though the heaven be mirker than mirk may be,
And our frail bark ships a fearful sea, —
Yet thou art safe — as on that sweet night
When our bridal candles gleamed far and bright." —
There came a shriek, and there came a sound,
And the Solway roar'd, and the ship spun round.

Second Fisherman.

" O lady, lady, why do you cry?
Though the waves be flashing top-mast high,
Though our frail bark yields to the dashing brine,
And heaven and earth show no saving sign,
There is One who comes in the time of need,
And curbs the waves as we curb a steed."—
The lightning came with the whirlwind blast,
And cleav'd the prow, and smote down the mast.

First Fisherman.

" O lady, lady, weep not, nor wail,
Though the sea runs howe as Dalswinton vale,
Then flashes high as Barnhourie brave,
And yawns for thee, like the yearning grave —
Though 'twixt thee and the ravening flood
There is but my arm, and this splintering wood,
The fell quicksand, or the famish'd brine,
Can ne'er harm a face so fair as thine."

Both.

" O lady, lady, be bold and brave,
Spread thy white breast to the fearful wave,
And cling to me with that white right hand,
And I'll set thee safe on the good dry land."—
A lightning flash on the shallop strook,
The Solway roar'd, and Caerlaverock shook;
From the sinking ship there were shriekings cast,
That were heard above the tempest's blast.

The young fishermen having concluded their song, my companion proceeded — " The lightning still flashed vivid and fast, and the storm raged with unabated fury; for between the ship and the shore the sea broke in frightful undulation, and leaped

on the greensward several fathoms deep abreast. My father, mounted on one horse, and holding another in his hand, stood prepared to give all the aid that a brave man could to the unhappy mariners; but neither horse nor man could endure the onset of that tremendous surge. The bark bore for a time the fury of the element — but a strong eastern wind came suddenly upon her, and, crushing her between the wave and the freestone bank, drove her from the entrance of my father's little bay towards the dwelling of Gibbie Gyrape, and the thick forest intervening, she was out of sight in a moment. My father saw, for the last time, the lady and her husband looking shoreward from the side of the vessel, as she drifted along; and as he galloped round the head of the forest, he heard for the last time the outcry of some, and the wail and intercession of others. When he came before the fisherman's house, a fearful sight presented itself — the ship, dashed to atoms, covered the shore with its wreck, and with

the bodies of the mariners — not a living soul escaped, save Richard Faulder, whom the fiend who guides the spectre-shallop of Solway had rendered proof to perils on the deep. The fisherman himself came suddenly from his cottage, all dripping and drenched, and my father addressed him: — 'O, Gilbert, Gilbert, what a fearful sight is this! — has Heaven blessedthee with making thee the means of saving a human soul?' — 'Nor soul nor body have I saved,' said the fisherman, doggedly: 'I have done my best — the storm proved too stark, and the lightning too fierce for me — their boat alone came near with a lady and a casket of gold — but she was swallowed up with the surge.' My father confessed afterwards that he was touched with the tone in which these words were delivered, and made answer, 'If thou hast done thy best to save souls to-night, a bright reward will be thine — if thou hast been fonder for gain than for working the mariners' redemption, thou hast much to answer for.' — As he uttered

these words, an immense wave rolled landward as far as the place where they stood — it almost left its foam on their faces, and suddenly receding, deposited at their feet the dead body of the lady. As my father lifted her in his arms, he observed that the jewels which had adorned her hair, at that time worn long — had been forcibly rent away — the diamonds and gold that enclosed her neck, and ornamented the bosom of her rich satin dress, had been torn off — the rings removed from her fingers — and on her neck, lately so lily-white and pure, there appeared the marks of hands — not laid there in love and gentleness, but with a fierce and deadly grasp.

"The lady was buried with the body of her husband, side by side, in Caerlaverock burial-ground. My father never openly accused Gilbert the fisherman of having murdered the lady for her riches as she reached the shore, preserved, as was supposed, from sinking, by her long, wide, and stiff satin robes — but from that hour till the

hour of his death, my father never broke bread with him — never shook him or his by the hand, nor spoke with them in wrath or in love. The fisherman, from that time, too, waxed rich and prosperous — and from being the needy proprietor of a halve-net, and the tenant at will of a rude cottage, he became, by purchase, lord of a handsome inheritance, proceeded to build a bonny mansion, and called it Gyrape-ha'; and became a leading man in a flock of a purer kind of Presbyterians — and a precept and example to the community.

"Though the portioner of Gyrape-ha' prospered wondrously, his claims to parochial distinction, and the continuance of his fortune, were treated with scorn by many, and with doubt by all: though nothing open or direct was said — looks, more cutting at times than the keenest speech, and actions still more expressive, showed that the hearts of honest men were alienated — the cause was left to his own interpretation. The peasant scrupled to become his servant —

sailors hesitated to receive his grain on board, lest perils should find them on the deep — the beggar ceased to solicit alms — the drover and horse-couper, an unscrupling generation, found out a more distant mode of concluding bargains than by shaking his hand — his daughters, handsome and blue-eyed, were neither wooed nor married — no maiden would hold tryste with his sons — though maidens were then as little loth as they are now; and the aged peasant, as he passed his new mansion, would shake his head and say — 'The voice of spilt blood will be lifted up against thee — and a spirit shall come up from the waters will make the corner-stone of thy habitation tremble and quake.'

"It happened, during the summer which succeeded this unfortunate shipwreck, that I accompanied my father to the Solway, to examine his nets. It was near midnight — the tide was making, and I sat down by his side, and watched the coming of the waters. The shore was glittering in starlight as far

as the eye could reach. Gilbert, the fisherman, had that morning removed from his cottage to his new mansion -- the former was, therefore, untenanted; and the latter, from its vantage ground on the crest of the hill, threw down to us the sound of mirth, and music, and dancing, a revelry common in Scotland on taking possession of a new house. As we lay quietly looking on the swelling sea, and observing the water-fowl swimming and ducking in the increasing waters, the sound of the merriment became more audible. My father listened to the mirth, looked to the sea, looked to the deserted cottage, and then to the new mansion, and said: — 'My son, I have a counsel to give thee — treasure it in thy heart, and practise it in thy life — the daughters of *him* of Gyrape-ha' are fair, and have an eye that would wile away the wits of the wisest — their father has wealth — I say nought of the way he came by it — they will have golden portions doubtless. But I would rather lay thy head aneath the

gowans in Caerlaverock kirkyard, and son have I none beside thee, than see thee lay it on the bridal pillow with the begotten of that man, though she had Nithsdale for her dowry. Let not my words be as seed sown on the ocean — I may not now tell thee why this warning is given. Before that fatal shipwreck, I would have said Prudence Gyrape, in her kirtle, was a better bride than some who have golden dowers. I have long thought some one would see a sight — and often, while holding my halve-net in the midnight tide, have I looked for something to appear — for where blood is shed, there doth the spirit haunt for a time, and give warning to man. May I be strengthened to endure the sight!'

"I answered not — being accustomed to regard my father's counsel as a matter not to be debated, as a solemn command: we heard something like the rustling of wings on the water, accompanied by a slight curling motion of the tide. 'God haud his right hand about us!' said my father, breath-

ing thick with emotion and awe, and looking on the sea with a gaze so intense that his eyes seemed to dilate, and the hair of his forehead to project forward, and bristle into life. I looked, but observed nothing, save a long line of thin and quivering light, dancing along the surface of the sea: it ascended the bank, on which it seemed to linger for a moment, and then entering the fisherman's cottage, made roof and rafter gleam with a sudden illumination. 'I'll tell thee what, Gibbie Gyrape,' said my father, 'I wouldna be the owner of thy heart, and the proprietor of thy right hand, for all the treasures in earth and ocean.' — A loud and piercing scream from the cottage made us thrill with fear, and in a moment the figures of three human beings rushed into the open air, and ran towards us with a swiftness which supernatural dread alone could inspire. We instantly knew them to be three noted smugglers, who infested the country; and rallying when they found my father maintain his ground,

they thus mingled their fears and the secrets of their trade — for terror fairly overpowered their habitual caution.

" 'I vow by the night tide, and the crooked timber,' said Willie Weethause, 'I never beheld sic a light as yon since our distillation pipe took fire, and made a burnt, instead of a drink-offering of our spirits; I'll uphold it comes for nae good — a warning may be — sae ye may gang on, Wattie Bouseaway, wi' yere wickedness; as for me, I'se gae hame and repent.' — 'Saulless bodie!' said his companion, whose natural hardihood was considerably supported by his communion with the brandy cup — 'Saulless bodie, for a flaff o' fire and a maiden's shadow would ye forswear the gallant trade? Saul to gude! but auld Miller Morison shall turn yere thrapple into a drain-pipe to wyse the waste water from his mill, if ye turn back now, and help us nae through with as strong an importation as ever cheered the throat, and cheeped in the crapin. Confound the

fizzenless bodie! he glowers as if this fine starlight were something frae the warst side of the world, and thae staring een o' his are busy shaping heaven's sweetest and balmiest aîr into the figures of wraiths and goblins.' — 'Robert Telfer,' said my father, addressing the third smuggler, 'tell me nought of the secrets of your perilous craft — but tell me what you have seen, and why ye uttered that fearful scream, that made the wood-doves start from Caerlaverock pines.' — 'I'll tell ye what, goodman,' said the mariner, 'I have seen the fires o' heaven running as thick along the sky, and on the surface of the ocean, as ye ever saw the blaze on a bowl o' punch at a merry-making, and neither quaked nor screamed; but ye'll mind the light that came to that cottage to-night was one for some fearful purport, which let the wise expound; sae it lessened nae one's courage to quail for sic an apparition. Od! if I thought living soul would ever make the start I gied an upcast to me,

I'd drill his breast-bane wi' my dirk like a turnip lantern.'

"My father mollified the wrath of this maritime desperado, by assuring him he beheld the light go from the sea to the cottage, and that he shook with terror, for it seemed no common light. 'Ou God! then,' said hopeful Robin, 'since it was one o' our ain cannie sea apparitions, I care less about it — I took it for some landward sprite! and now I think on't, where were my een? did it no stand amang its ain light, with its long hanks of hair dripping, and drenched; with a casket of gold in ae hand, and the other guarding its throat? I'll be bound it's the ghost o' some sonsie lass that has had her neck nipped for her gold — and had she stayed till I emptied the bicker o' brandy, I would have ask'd a cannie question or twae.' Willie Weethause had now fairly overcome his consternation, and began to feel all his love for the gallant trade, as his comrade called it, return.

'The tide serves, lads! the tide serves; let us slip our drap o' brandy into the bit bonnie boat, and tottle away amang the sweet starlight as far as the Kingholm or the town quarry — ye ken we have to meet Bailie Gardevine, and laird Soukaway o' Ladlemouth.' They returned, not without hesitation and fear, to the old cottage; carried their brandy to the boat; and as my father and I went home, we heard the dipping of their oars in the Nith, along the banks of which they sold their liquor, and told their tale of fear, magnifying its horror at every step, and introducing abundance of variations.

"The story of the Ghost with the Golden Casket flew over the country side with all its variations, and with many comments: some said they saw her, and some thought they saw her — and those who had the hardihood to keep watch on the beach at midnight, had their tales to tell of terrible lights and strange visions. With one who

delighted in the marvellous, the spectre was decked in attributes that made the circle of auditors tighten round the hearth; while others, who allowed to a ghost only a certain quantity of thin air to clothe itself in, reduced it in their description to a very unpoetic shadow, or a kind of better sort of will-o'-the-wisp, that could for its own amusement counterfeit the human shape. There were many who, like my father, beheld the singular illumination appear at midnight on the coast; saw also something sailing along with it in the form of a lady in bright garments, her hair long and wet, and shining in diamonds; and heard a struggle, and the shriek as of a creature drowning.

"The belief of the peasantry did not long confine the apparition to the sea coast; it was seen sometimes late at night far inland, and following Gilbert the Fisherman, like a human shadow — like a pure light — like a white garment — and often in the

shape, and with the attributes, in which it disturbed the carousal of the smugglers. I heard douce Davie Haining — a God-fearing man, and an elder of the Burgher congregation, and on whose word I could well lippen, when drink was kept from his head, — I heard him say that as he rode home late from the Roodfair of Dumfries — the night was dark, there lay a dusting of snow on the ground, and no one appeared on the road but himself — he was lilting and singing the cannie end of the auld sang, "There's a cuttie stool in our Kirk," which was made on some foolish quean's misfortune, when he heard the sound of horses' feet behind him at full gallop, and ere he could look round, who should flee past, urging his horse with whip and spur, but Gilbert the Fisherman! 'Little wonder that he galloped,' said the elder, 'for a fearful form hovered around him, making many a clutch at him, and with every clutch uttering a shriek most piercing to hear.' But why

should I make a long story of a common tale? The curse of spilt blood fell on him, and on his children, and on all he possessed; — his sons and daughters died, his flocks perished, his grain grew, but never filled the ear; and fire came from heaven, or rose from hell, and consumed his house, and all that was therein. He is now a man of ninety years — a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, without a house to put his white head in, with the unexpiated curse still clinging to him."

While my companion was making this summary of human wretchedness, I observed the figure of a man, stooping to the earth with extreme age, gliding through among the bushes of the ruined cottage, and approaching the advancing tide. He wore a loose great coat, patched to the ground, and fastened round his waist by a belt and buckle, — the remains of stockings and shoes were on his feet; a kind of fisherman's cap surmounted some remaining

white hairs, while a long peeled stick supported him as he went. My companion gave an involuntary shudder when he saw him — "Lo, and behold, now, here comes Gilbert the Fisherman! once every twenty-four hours doth he come, let the wind and the rain be as they will, to the nightly tide, to work o'er again, in imagination, his auld tragedy of unrighteousness. See how he waves his hand, as if he welcomed some one from sea — he raises his voice, too, as if something in the water required his counsel; and see how he dashes up to the middle, and grapples with the water as if he clutched a human being!"

I looked on the old man, and heard him call, in a hollow and broken voice, "O hoy! the ship, O hoy, — turn your boat's head ashore! — and my bonnie lady, keep haud o' yere casket. — Hech be't! that wave would have sunk a three-decker, let be a slender boat — see — see an' she binna sailing aboon the water like a wild swan!"

— and, wading deeper in the tide as he spoke, he seemed to clutch at something with both hands, and struggle with it in the water.

"Na! na! dinna haud your white hands to me — ye wear owre mickle gowd in your hair, and o'er many diamonds on your bosom, to 'scape drowning. There's as mickle gowd in this casket as would have sunk thee seventy fathom deep." And he continued to hold his hands under the water, muttering all the while.

"She's half gane now — and I'll be a braw laird, and build a bonnie house, and gang crousely to kirk and market — now I may let the waves work their will — my work will be ta'en for theirs."

He turned to wade to the shore, but a large and heavy wave came full dash on him, and bore him off his feet, and ere any assistance reached him, all human aid was too late; for nature was so exhausted with the fulness of years, and with his exertions,

that a spoonful of water would have drowned him. The body of this miserable old man was interred, after some opposition from the peasantry, beneath the wall of the kirkyard; and from that time, the Ghost with the Golden Casket was seen no more, and only continued to haunt the evening tale of the hind and the farmer.

THE HAUNTED SHIPS.

——— "Though my mind's not
Hoodwink'd with rustic marvels, I do think
There are more things in the grove, the air, the flood,
Yea, and the charnell'd earth, than what wise man,
Who walks so proud as if his form alone
Fill'd the wide temple of the universe,
Will let a frail mind say. I'd write i' the creed
O' the sagest head alive, that fearful forms,
Holy or reprobate, do page men's heels;
That shapes, too horrid for our gaze, stand o'er
The murderer's dust, and for revenge glare up,
Even till the stars weep fire for very pity."

ALONG the sea of Solway, romantic on the Scottish side, with its woodland, its bays, its cliffs, and headlands; and interesting on the English side, with its many beautiful towns with their shadows on the water, rich pastures, safe harbours, and numerous ships; there still linger many traditional stories of a maritime nature, most of them connected with superstitions singularly wild and unusual. To the curious these tales afford a

rich fund of entertainment, from the many diversities of the same story; some dry and barren, and stripped of all the embellishments of poetry; others dressed out in all the riches of a superstitious belief and haunted imagination. In this they resemble the inland traditions of the peasants; but many of the oral treasures of the Galwegian or the Cumbrian coast have the stamp of the Dane and the Norseman upon them, and claim but a remote or faint affinity with the legitimate legends of Caledonia. Something like a rude prosaic outline of several of the most noted of the northern ballads, the adventures and depredations of the old ocean kings, still lends life to the evening tale; and, among others, the story of the Haunted Ships is still popular among the maritime peasantry.

One fine harvest evening, I went on board the shallop of Richard Faulder, of Allanbay; and, committing ourselves to the waters, we allowed a gentle wind from the east to waft us at its pleasure towards the Scottish coast.

We passed the sharp promontory of Siddick; and skirting the land within a stone-cast, glided along the shore till we came within sight of the ruined Abbey of Sweetheart. The green mountain of Criffell ascended beside us; and the bleat of the flocks from its summit, together with the winding of the evening horn of the reapers, came softened into something like music over land and sea. We pushed our shallop into a deep and wooded bay, and sat silently looking on the serene beauty of the place. The moon glimmered in her rising through the tall shafts of the pines of Caerlaverock; and the sky, with scarce a cloud, showered down on wood, and headland, and bay, the twinkling beams of a thousand stars, rendering every object visible. The tide, too, was coming with that swift and silent swell observable when the wind is gentle; the woody curves along the land were filling with the flood, till it touched the green branches of the drooping trees; while in the centre current the roll and the plunge of a thousand

pellocks told to the experienced fisherman that salmon were abundant.

As we looked, we saw an old man emerging from a path that winded to the shore through a grove of doddered hazel; he carried a halve-net on his back, while behind him came a girl, bearing a small harpoon with which the fishers are remarkably dexterous in striking their prey. The senior seated himself on a large grey stone, which overlooked the bay, laid aside his bonnet, and submitted his bosom and neck to the refreshing sea breeze; and taking his harpoon from his attendant, sat with the gravity and composure of a spirit of the flood, with his ministering nymph behind him. We pushed our shallop to the shore, and soon stood at their side.

"This is old Mark Macmoran, the mariner, with his grand-daughter Barbara," said Richard Faulder, in a whisper that had something of fear in it; "he knows every creek, and cavern, and quicksand, in Solway, — has seen the Spectre Hound that

haunts the Isle of Man; has heard him bark, and at every bark has seen a ship sink; and he has seen, too, the Haunted Ships in full sail; and, if all tales be true, he has sailed in them himself; he's an awful person."

Though I perceived in the communication of my friend something of the superstition of the sailor, I could not help thinking that common rumour had made a happy choice in singling out old Mark to maintain her intercourse with the invisible world. His hair, which seemed to have refused all intercourse with the comb, hung matted upon his shoulders; a kind of mantle, or rather blanket, pinned with a wooden skewer round his neck, fell mid-leg down, concealing all his nether garments as far as a pair of hose, darned with yarn of all conceivable colours, and a pair of shoes, patched and repaired till nothing of the original structure remained, and clasped on his feet with two massy silver buckles. If the dress of the old man was rude and sordid, that of his

grand-daughter was gay, and even rich. She wore a boddice of fine wool, wrought round the bosom with alternate leaf and lily, and a kirtle of the same fabric, which, almost touching her white and delicate ancle, showed her snowy feet, so fairy-light and round that they scarcely seemed to touch the grass where she stood. Her hair, a natural ornament which woman seeks much to improve, was of bright glossy brown, and encumbered rather than adorned with a snood, set thick with marine productions, among which the small clear pearl found in the Solway was conspicuous. Nature had not trusted to a handsome shape, and a sylph-like air, for young Barbara's influence over the heart of man; but had bestowed a pair of large bright blue eyes, swimming in liquid light, so full of love, and gentleness, and joy, that all the sailors from Annanwater to far Saint Bees acknowledged their power, and sung songs about the bonnie lass of Mark Macmoran. She stood holding a small gaff-hook of polished steel

in her hand, and seemed not dissatisfied with the glances I bestowed on her from time to time, and which I held more than requited by a single glance of those eyes which retained so many capricious hearts in subjection.

The tide, though rapidly augmenting, had not yet filled the bay at our feet. The moon now streamed fairly over the tops of Caerlaverock pines, and showed the expanse of ocean dimpling and swelling, on which sloops and shallops came dancing, and displaying at every turn their extent of white sail against the beam of the moon. I looked on old Mark the Mariner, who, seated motionless on his grey stone, kept his eye fixed on the increasing waters with a look of seriousness and sorrow in which I saw little of the calculating spirit of a mere fisherman. Though he looked on the coming tide, his eyes seemed to dwell particularly on the black and decayed hulls of two vessels, which, half immersed in the quicksand, still addressed to every heart a tale

of shipwreck and desolation. The tide wheeled and foamed around them; and creeping inch by inch up the side, at last fairly threw its waters over the top, and a long and hollow eddy showed the resistance which the liquid element received.

The moment they were fairly buried in the water, the old man clasped his hands together, and said, "Blessed be the tide that will break over and bury ye for ever! Sad to mariners, and sorrowful to maids and mothers, has the time been you have choked up this deep and bonnie bay. For evil were you sent, and for evil have you continued. Every season finds from you its song of sorrow and wail, its funeral processions, and its shrouded corses. Woe to the land where the wood grew that made ye! Cursed be the axe that hewed ye on the mountains, the hands that joined ye together, the bay that ye first swam in, and the wind that wafted ye here! Seven times have ye put my life in peril, three fair sons have ye swept from my side, and two bonnie grand-bairns; and now, even

now, your waters foam and flash for my destruction, did I venture my infirm limbs in quest of food in your deadly bay. I see by that ripple and that foam, and hear by the sound and singing of your surge, that ye yearn for another victim; but it shall not be me nor mine."

Even as the old mariner addressed himself to the wrecked ships, a young man appeared at the southern extremity of the bay, holding his halve-net in his hand, and hastening into the current. Mark rose, and shouted, and waved him back from a place which, to a person unacquainted with the dangers of the bay, real and superstitious, seemed sufficiently perilous: his granddaughter, too, added her voice to his, and waved her white hands; but the more they strove, the faster advanced the peasant, till he stood to his middle in the water, while the tide increased every moment in depth and strength. "Andrew, Andrew," cried the young woman, in a voice quavering with emotion, "turn, turn, I tell you: O the

Ships, the Haunted Ships!" but the appearance of a fine run of fish had more influence with the peasant than the voice of bonnie Barbara, and forward he dashed, net in hand. In a moment he was borne off his feet, and mingled like foam with the water, and hurried towards the fatal eddies which whirled and roared round the sunken ships. But he was a powerful young man, and an expert swimmer: he seized on one of the projecting ribs of the nearest hulk, and clinging to it with the grasp of despair, uttered yell after yell, sustaining himself against the prodigious rush of the current.

From a shealing of turf and straw, within the pitch of a bar from the spot where we stood, came out an old woman bent with age, and leaning on a crutch. "I heard the voice of that lad Andrew Lammie; can the chield be drowning, that he skirls sae uncannilie?" said the old woman, seating herself on the ground, and looking earnestly at the water. "Ou aye," she continued, "he's doomed, he's doomed; heart and

hand can never save him; boats, ropes, and man's strength and wit, all vain! vain! he's doomed, he's doomed!"

By this time I had thrown myself into the shallop, followed reluctantly by Richard Faulder, over whose courage and kindness of heart superstition had great power; and with one push from the shore, and some exertion in skulling, we came within a quoit-cast of the unfortunate fisherman. He staid not to profit by our aid; for when he perceived us near, he uttered a piercing shriek of joy, and bounded towards us through the agitated element the full length of an oar. I saw him for a second on the surface of the water; but the eddying current sucked him down; and all I ever beheld of him again was his hand held above the flood, and clutching in agony at some imaginary aid. I sat gazing in horror on the vacant sea before us: but a breathing time before, a human being, full of youth, and strength, and hope, was there: his cries were still ringing in my ears, and echoing in the

woods; and now nothing was seen or heard save the turbulent expanse of water, and the sound of its chafing on the shores. We pushed back our shallop, and resumed our station on the cliff beside the old mariner and his descendant.

"Wherefore sought ye to peril your own lives fruitlessly?" said Mark, "in attempting to save the doomed. Whoso touches those infernal ships, never survives to tell the tale. Woe to the man who is found nigh them at midnight when the tide has subsided, and they arise in their former beauty, with forecastle, and deck, and sail, and pennon, and shroud! Then is seen the streaming of lights along the water from their cabin windows, and then is heard the sound of mirth and the clamour of tongues, and the infernal whoop and halloo, and song, ringing far and wide. Woe to the man who comes nigh them!"

To all this my Allanbay companion listened with a breathless attention. I felt something touched with a superstition to

which I partly believed I had seen one victim offered up; and I inquired of the old mariner, "How and when came these haunted ships there? To me they seem but the melancholy relics of some unhappy voyagers, and much more likely to warn people to shun destruction, than entice and delude them to it."

"And so," said the old man with a smile, which had more of sorrow in it than of mirth; "and so, young man, these black and shattered hulks seem to the eye of the multitude. But things are not what they seem: that water, a kind and convenient servant to the wants of man, which seems so smooth, and so dimpling, and so gentle, has swallowed up a human soul even now; and the place which it covers, so fair and so level, is a faithless quicksand, out of which none escape. Things are otherwise than they seem. Had you lived as long as I have had the sorrow to live; had you seen the storms, and braved the perils, and endured the distresses which have befallen

me; had you sat gazing out on the dreary ocean at midnight on a haunted coast; had you seen comrade after comrade, brother after brother, and son after son, swept away by the merciless ocean from your very side; had you seen the shapes of friends, doomed to the wave and the quicksand, appearing to you in the dreams and visions of the night; then would your mind have been prepared for crediting the maritime legends of mariners; and the two haunted Danish ships would have had their terrors for you, as they have for all who sojourn on this coast.

"Of the time and the cause of their destruction," continued the old man, "I know nothing certain: they have stood as you have seen them for uncounted time; and while all other ships wrecked on this unhappy coast have gone to pieces, and rotted, and sunk away in a few years, these two haunted hulks have neither sunk in the quicksand, nor has a single spar or board been displaced. Maritime legend says, that

two ships of Denmark having had permission, for a time, to work deeds of darkness and dolour on the deep, were at last condemned to the whirlpool and the sunken rock, and were wrecked in this bonnie bay, as a sign to seamen to be gentle and devout. The night when they were lost was a harvest evening of uncommon mildness and beauty: the sun had newly set; the moon came brighter and brighter out; and the reapers, laying their sickles at the root of the standing corn, stood on rock and bank, looking at the increasing magnitude of the waters, for sea and land were visible from Saint Bees to Barnhourie. The sails of two vessels were soon seen bent for the Scottish coast; and with a speed outrunning the swiftest ship, they approached the dangerous quicksands and headland of Borranpoint. On the deck of the foremost ship not a living soul was seen, or shape, unless something in darkness and form resembling a human shadow could be called a shape, which flitted from extremity to extremity of

the ship, with the appearance of trimming the sails, and directing the vessel's course. But the decks of its companion were crowded with human shapes; the captain, and mate, and sailor, and cabin boy, all seemed there; and from them the sound of mirth and minstrelsy echoed over land and water. The coast which they skirted along was one of extreme danger; and the reapers shouted to warn them to beware of sand-bank and rock; but of this friendly counsel no notice was taken, except that a large and famished dog, which sat on the prow, answered every shout with a long, loud, and melancholy howl. The deep sand-bank of Carsethorn was expected to arrest the career of these desperate navigators; but they passed, with the celerity of waterfowl, over an obstruction which had wrecked many pretty ships.

"Old men shook their heads and departed, saying, 'We have seen the fiend sailing in a bottomless ship; let us go home and pray:' but one young and wilful man

said, 'Fiend! I'll warrant it's nae fiend, but douce Janet Withershins, the witch, holding a carouse with some of her Cumberland cummers, and mickle red wine will be spilt atween them. Dod I would gladly have a toothfu'! I'll warrant its nane o' your cauld sour slae-water like a bottle of Bailie Skrinkie's port, but right drap-o'-my-heart's-blood stuff, that would waken a body out of their last linen. I wonder where the cummers will anchor their craft?'—'And I'll vow,' said another rustic, 'the wine they quaff is none of your visionary drink, such as a drouthie body has dished out to his lips in a dream; nor is it shadowy and unsubstantial, like the vessels they sail in, which are made out of a cockle-shell or a cast-off-slipper, or the paring of a seaman's right thumb-nail. I once got a hansel out of a witch's quaigh myself,—auld Marion Mathers, of Dustiefoot, whom they tried to bury in the old kirk-yard of Dunscore, but the cummer raise as fast as they laid her down, and nae where else would she lie but

in the bonnie green kirk-yard of Kier, among douce and sponsible fowk. So I'll vow that the wine of a witch's cup is as fell liquor as ever did a kindly turn to a poor man's heart; and be they fiends, or be they witches, if they have red wine asteer, I'll risk a drouket sark for ae glorious tout on't.' 'Silence, ye sinners,' said the minister's son of a neighbouring parish, who united in his own person his father's lack of devotion with his mother's love of liquor. 'Whisht!—speak as if ye had the fear of something holy before ye. Let the vessels run their own way to destruction: who can stay the eastern wind, and the current of the Solway sea? I can find ye Scripture warrant for that: so let them try their strength on Blawhooly rocks, and their might on the broad quicksand. There's a surf running there would knock the ribs together of a galley built by the imps of the pit, and commanded by the Prince of Darkness. Bonnilie and bravely they sail away there; but before the blast blows by they'll be

wrecked; and red wine and strong brandy will be as rife as dyke-water, and we'll drink the health of bonnie Bell Blackness out of her left foot slipper.'

"The speech of the young profligate was applauded by several of his companions, and away they flew to the bay of Blawhooly, from whence they never returned. The two vessels were observed all at once to stop in the bosom of the bay, on the spot where their hulls now appear: the mirth and the minstrelsy waxed louder than ever; and the forms of maidens, with instruments of music and wine-cups in their hands, thronged the decks. A boat was lowered; and the same shadowy pilot who conducted the ships made it start towards the shore with the rapidity of lightning, and its head knocked against the bank where the four young men stood, who longed for the unblest drink. They leaped in with a laugh, and with a laugh were they welcomed on deck; wine cups were given to each, and as they raised them

to their lips the vessels melted away beneath their feet; and one loud shriek, mingled with laughter still louder, was heard over land and water for many miles. Nothing more was heard or seen till the morning, when the crowd who came to the beach saw with fear and wonder the two Haunted Ships, such as they now seem, masts and tackle gone; nor mark, nor sign, by which their name, country, or destination, could be known, was left remaining. Such is the tradition of the mariners; and its truth has been attested by many families whose sons and whose fathers have been drowned in the haunted bay of Blawhooly."

"And trow ye," said the old woman, who, attracted from her hut by the drowning cries of the young fisherman, had remained an auditor of the mariner's legend; "And trow ye, Mark Macmoran, that the tale of the Haunted Ships is done? I can say no to that. Mickle have mine

ears heard; but more mine eyes have witnessed since I came to dwell in this humble home by the side of the deep sea. I mind the night weel: it was on Hallowmass-eve: the nuts were cracked, and the apples were eaten, and spell and charm were tried at my fire-side; till, wearied with diving into the dark waves of futurity, the lads and lasses fairly took to the more visible blessings of kind words, tender clasps, and gentle courtship. Soft words in a maiden's ear, and a kindlie kiss o' her lip, were old world matters to me, Mark Macmoran; though I mean not to say that I have been free of the folly of daunering and daffin with a youth in my day, and keeping tryste with him in dark and lonely places. However, as I say, these times of enjoyment were passed and gone with me; the mair's the pity that pleasure should fly sae fast away,—and as I could nae make sport I thought I should not mar any; so out I sauntered into the fresh

cold air, and sat down behind that old oak, and looked abroad on the wide sea. I had my ain sad thoughts, ye may think, at the time: it was in that very bay my blythe good-man perished, with seven more in his company, and on that very bank where ye see the waves leaping and foaming, I saw seven stately corses streeked, but the dearest was the eighth. It was a woeful sight to me, a widow, with four bonnie boys, with nought to support them but these twa hands, and God's blessing, and a cow's grass. I have never liked to live out of sight of this bay since that time; and mony's the moonlight night I sit looking on these watery mountains, and these waste shores; it does my heart good, whatever it may do to my head. So ye see it was Hallowmass night; and looking on sea and land sat I; and my heart wandering to other thoughts soon made me forget my youthful company at hame. It might be near the howe hour of the night: the tide was making, and its singing brought

strange old world stories with it; and I thought on the dangers that sailors endure, the fates they meet with, and the fearful forms they see. My own blythe goodman had seen sights that made him grave enough at times, though he aye tried to laugh them away.

"Aweel, atween that very rock aneath us and the coming tide, I saw, or thought I saw, for the tale is so dream-like, that the whole might pass for a vision of the night, I saw the form of a man: his plaid was grey; his face was grey; and his hair, which hung low down till it nearly came to the middle of his back, was as white as the white sea-foam. He began to howk and dig under the bank; an' God be near me, thought I, this maun be the unblessed spirit of Auld Adam Gowdgowpin, the miser, who is doomed to dig for shipwrecked treasure, and count how many millions are hidden for ever from man's enjoyment. The Form found something which in shape and hue seemed a left-

foot slipper of brass; so down to the tide he marched, and placing it on the water, whirled it thrice round; and the infernal slipper dilated at every turn, till it became a bonnie barge with its sails bent, and on board leaped the form, and scudded swiftly away. He came to one of the Haunted Ships; and striking it with his oar, a fair ship, with mast, and canvass, and mariners, started up: he touched the other Haunted Ship, and produced the like transformation; and away the three spectre ships bounded, leaving a track of fire behind them on the billows which was long unextinguished. Now was nae that a bonnie and a fearful sight to see beneath the light of the Hallowmass moon? But the tale is far frae finished; for mariners say that once a year, on a certain night, if ye stand on the Borran-point, ye will see the infernal shallops coming snoring through the Solway: ye will hear the same laugh, and song, and mirth, and minstrelsy, which our ancestors heard;

see them bound over the sand-banks and sunken rocks like sea-gulls, cast their anchor in Blawhooly-bay, while the shadowy figure lowers down the boat, and augments their numbers with the four unhappy mortals to whose memory a stone stands in the kirk-yard, with a sinking ship and a shoreless sea cut upon it. Then the spectre ships vanish, and the drowning shriek of mortals, and the rejoicing laugh of fiends are heard, and the old hulls are left as a memorial that the old spiritual kingdom has not departed from the earth. But I maun away, and trim my little cottage fire, and make it burn and blaze up bonnie, to warm the crickets, and my cold and crazy bones, that maun soon be laid aneath the green sod in the eerie kirk-yard." And away the old dame tottered to her cottage, secured the door on the inside, and soon the hearth-flame was seen to glimmer and gleam through the key-hole and window.

"I'll tell ye what," said the old mariner, in a subdued tone, and with a shrewd

and suspicious glance of his eye after the old sibyl, "it's a word that may not very well be uttered, but there are many mistakes made in evening stories if old Moll Moray there, where she lives, knows not mickle more than she is willing to tell of the Haunted Ships, and their unhallowed mariners. She lives cannilie and quietly; no one knows how she is fed or supported; but her dress is aye whole, her cottage ever smokes, and her table lacks neither of wine, white and red, nor of fowl and fish, and white bread and brown. It was a dear scoff to Jock Matheson, when he called old Moll the uncannie carline of Blawhooly: his boat ran round and round in the centre of the Solway,—every body said it was enchanted, —and down it went head foremost: and had nae Jock been a swimmer equal to a sheldrake, he would have fed the fish; —but I'll warrant it sobered the lad's speech; and he never reckoned himself safe

till he made auld Moll the present of a new kirtle and a stone of cheese."

"O father," said his grand-daughter Barbara, "ye surely wrong poor old Mary Moray: what use could it be to an old woman like her, who has no wrongs to redress, no malice to work out against mankind, and nothing to seek of enjoyment save a cannie hour and a quiet grave, — what use could the fellowship of fiends, and the communion of evil spirits, be to her? I know Jenny Primrose puts rowan-tree above the door-head when she sees old Mary coming; I know the good wife of Kittlenaket wears rowan-berry leaves in the headband of her blue kirtle, and all for the sake of averting the unsonsie glance of Mary's right ee; and I know that the auld laird of Burntroutwater drives his seven cows to their pasture with a wand of witchtree, to keep Mary from milking them. But what has all that to do with haunted shallops, visionary mariners, and

bottomless boats? I have heard myself as pleasant a tale about the Haunted Ships and their unworldly crews, as any one would wish to hear in a winter evening. It was told me by young Benjie Macharg, one summer night, sitting on Arbigland-bank: the lad intended a sort of love meeting; but all that he could talk of was about smearing sheep and shearing sheep, and of the wife which the Norway elves of the Haunted Ships made for his uncle Sandie Macharg. And I shall tell ye the tale as the honest lad told it to me.

"Alexander Macharg, besides being the laird of three acres of peatmoss, two kale gardens, and the owner of seven good milch cows, a pair of horses, and six pet sheep, was the husband of one of the handsomest women in seven parishes. Many a lad sighed the day he was brided; and a Nithsdale laird and two Annandale moorland farmers drank themselves to their last linen, as well as their last shilling, through sorrow for her loss. But married was the

dame; and home she was carried, to bear rule over her home and her husband, as an honest woman should. Now ye maun ken that though the flesh and blood lovers of Alexander's bonnie wife all ceased to love and to sue her after she became another's, there were certain admirers who did not consider their claim at all abated, or their hopes lessened by the kirk's famous obstacle of matrimony. Ye have heard how the devout minister of Tinwald had a fair son carried away, and bedded against his liking to an unchristened bride, whom the elves and the fairies provided: ye have heard how the bonnie bride of the drunken laird of Soukitup was stolen by the fairies out at the back-window of the bridal chamber, the time the bridegroom was groping his way to the chamber-door; and ye have heard — but why need I multiply cases? such things in the ancient days were as common as candle-light. So ye'll no hinder certain water elves and sea fairies, who sometimes keep festival and summer mirth

in these old haunted hulks, from falling in love with the weel-faured wife of Laird Macharg; and to their plots and contrivances they went how they might accomplish to sunder man and wife; and sundering such a man and such a wife was like sundering the green leaf from the summer, or the fragrance from the flower.

"So it fell on a time that Laird Macharg took his halve-net on his back, and his steel spear in his hand, and down to Blawhooly-bay gade he, and into the water he went right between the two haunted hulks, and placing his net awaited the coming of the tide. The night, ye maun ken, was mirk, and the wind lowne, and the singing of the increasing waters among the shells and the peebles, was heard for sundry miles. All at once lights began to glance and twinkle on board the two Haunted Ships from every hole and seam, and presently the sound as of a hatchet employed in squaring timber echoed far and wide. But if the toil of these unearthly workmen

amazed the Laird, how much more was his amazement increased when a sharp shrill voice called out, 'Ho! brother, what are you doing now?' A voice still shriller responded from the other haunted ship, 'I'm making a wife to Sandie Macharg!' and a loud quavering laugh running from ship to ship, and from bank to bank, told the joy they expected from their labour.

"Now the laird, besides being a devout and a God-fearing man, was shrewd and bold; and in plot, and contrivance, and skill in conducting his designs, was fairly an overmatch for any dozen land elves: but the water elves are far more subtle; besides, their haunts and their dwellings being in the great deep, pursuit and detection is hopeless if they succeed in carrying their prey to the waves. But ye shall hear. Home flew the laird,—collected his family around the hearth,—spoke of the signs and the sins of the times, and talked of mortification and prayer for averting calamity; and finally, taking his

father's Bible, brass clasps, black print, and covered with calf-skin, from the shelf, he proceeded without let or stint to perform domestic worship. I should have told ye that he bolted and locked the door, shut up all inlet to the house, threw salt into the fire, and proceeded in every way like a man skilful in guarding against the plots of fairies and fiends. His wife looked on all this with wonder; but she saw something in her husband's looks that hindered her from intruding either question or advice, and a wise woman was she.

"Near the mid hour of the night the rush of a horse's feet was heard, and the sound of a rider leaping from its back, and a heavy knock came to the door, accompanied by a voice, saying, 'The cummer drink's hot, and the knave bairn is expected at Laird Laurie's to-night; sae mount, good-wife, and come.'

"'Preserve me!' said the wife of Sandie Macharg; 'that's news indeed! who could have thought it? the Laird has been heirless

for seventeen years! Now Sandie, my man, fetch me my skirt and hood.'

"But he laid his arm round his wife's neck, and said, 'If all the lairds in Galloway go heirless, over this door threshold shall you not stir to-night; and I have said, and I have sworn it: seek not to know why or wherefore — but, Lord, send us thy blessed mornlight.' The wife looked for a moment in her husband's eyes, and desisted from further entreaty.

"'But let us send a civil message to the gossips, Sandy; and hadnae ye better say I am sair laid with a sudden sickness? though its sinful-like to send the poor messenger a mile agate with a lie in his mouth without a glass of brandy.'

"'To such a messenger, and to those who sent him, no apology is needed,' said the austere Laird, 'so let him depart.' And the clatter of a horse's hoofs was heard, and the muttered imprecations of its rider on the churlish treatment he had experienced.

" 'Now Sandie, my lad,' said his wife, laying an arm particularly white and round about his neck as she spoke, 'are you not a queer man and a stern? I have been your wedded wife now these three years; and, beside my dower, have brought you three as bonnie bairns as ever smiled aneath a summer sun. O man, you a douce man, and fitter to be an elder than even Willie Greer himself, I have the minister's ain word for't, to put on these hard-hearted looks, and gang waving your arms that way, as if ye said, "I winna take the counsel of sic a hempie as you," I'm your ain leal wife, and will and maun have an explanation.'

" To all this Sandie Macharg replied, 'It is written — "Wives, obey your husbands;" but we have been stayed in our devotion, so let us pray;' and down he knelt: his wife knelt also, for she was as devout as bonnie; and beside them knelt their household, and all lights were extinguished.

"'Now this beats a',' muttered his wife to herself; 'however, I shall be obedient for a time; but if I dinna ken what all this is for before the morn by sunket-time, my tongue is nae langer a tongue, nor my hands worth wearing.'

"The voice of her husband in prayer interrupted this mental soliloquy; and ardently did he beseech to be preserved from the wiles of the fiends, and the snares of Satan; 'from witches, ghosts, goblins, elves, fairies, spunkies, and water-kelpies; from the spectre shallop of Solway; from spirits visible and invisible; from the Haunted Ships and their unearthly tenants; from maritime spirits that plotted against godly men, and fell in love with their wives —'

"'Nay, but his presence be near us!' said his wife in a low tone of dismay. 'God guide my gudeman's wits: I never heard such a prayer from human lips before. But Sandie, my man, Lord's sake, rise: what fearful light is this? — barn, and

byre, and stable, maun be in a blaze; and Hawkie and Hurley,—Doddie, and Cherrie, and Damson-plum, will be smoored with reek, and scorched with flame.'

"And a flood of light, but not so gross as a common fire, which ascended to heaven and filled all the court before the house, amply justified the good wife's suspicions. But to the terrors of fire, Sandie was as immovable as he was to the imaginary groans of the barren wife of Laird Laurie; and he held his wife, and threatened the weight of his right hand—and it was a heavy one—to all who ventured abroad, or even unbolted the door. The neighing and prancing of horses, and the bellowing of cows, augmented the horrors of the night; and to any one who only heard the din, it seemed that the whole onstead was in a blaze, and horses and cattle perishing in the flame. All wiles, common or extraordinary, were put in practice to entice or force the honest farmer and his wife to open the door; and when

the like success attended every new stratagem, silence for a little while ensued, and a long, loud, and shrilling laugh, wound up the dramatic efforts of the night. In the morning, when Laird Macharg went to the door, he found standing against one of the pilasters a piece of black ship oak, rudely fashioned into something like human form, and which skilful people declared would have been clothed with seeming flesh and blood, and palmed upon him by elfin adroitness for his wife, had he admitted his visitants. A synod of wise men and women sat upon the woman of timber, and she was finally ordered to be devoured by fire, and that in the open air. A fire was soon made, and into it the elfin sculpture was tossed from the prongs of two pairs of pitchforks. The blaze that arose was awful to behold; and hissings, and burstings, and loud cracklings, and strange noises, were heard in the midst of the flame; and when the whole sank into ashes, a drinking cup of some precious metal

was found;· and this cup, fashioned no doubt by elfin skill, but rendered harmless by the purification with fire, the sons and daughters of Sandie Macharg and his wife drink out of to this very day. Bless all bold men, say I, and obedient wives!"

DEATH

OF THE

LAIRD OF WARLSWORM.

It happened on a fine harvest afternoon, that I found myself at the entrance of one of the wild and romantic glens or vales of Galloway; and as a Galwegian vale has a character of its own, it would mutilate my story to leave it undescribed. Imagine an expanse of brown moor-land extending as far as sight can reach, threaded by innumerable burns or brooks, and only tenanted in appearance by flocks of sheep, or by coveys of red and black game. Here and there a shepherd was seen with his dogs, or a bareheaded maiden with her pails of milk, going homewards from the fold, and cheering her way with one of those old tender

traditional ballads which some neglected spirit, like that of John Lowe, has scattered so largely among the pastoral glens of Galloway. A shepherd's house, or his summer sheal, rising like the "bonnie bower" of the two heroines of Scottish song, on a burn brae, and covered thick with rushes, while it threw its long wavering line of blue smoke into the clear sharp air, spoke of the presence of the sons and daughters of man, or said, in the quaint and homely language of the Galwegian proverb, "where four cloots go, man's twa feet maun follow."

But this heath, barren and wild as it seemed, had other attractions. At the distance of almost every little mile, numerous streams of smoke ascended from the brown moor; the sound and the hum of man, busied with the flail, the hatchet, or the hammer, was heard; the cry and the merriment of children abounded; and here and there a green tree-top or a chimney-head, a kirk-spire, or a ruined tower, projecting above the horizon of blossomed

heather, proclaimed to the traveller that Caledonia, amid her deserts, has her well-peopled glens, and her fruitful places.

On a summer sabbath morning the people of Galloway are to be beheld in their glory; then every little deep green and populous vale pours forth its own sedate, and pious, and well-dressed multitude. From the dame in the douce grey mantle to the maiden in glittering silks and scarlets; from him in the broad blue bonnet to her in the gallant cap and feather; from the trembling and careful step of age to the firm and heedless stride of youth; from her who dreams of bridal favours and bridegroom's vows, to him bent to the earth with age, musing on the burial procession and the gaping grave, — all are there, moving on staid and soberly to the house of God. Often have I stood and seen the scanty current of people issue out like the little brook of their native glen, join themselves to a fuller stream, and, increasing as they flowed on, become as a river ere they reached the entrance to the

burial-ground, which, hallowed with their fathers' dust, encompassed their native kirk. I have heard the bell toll, and the melody of their psalms of praise and hymns of thanksgiving flow far and wide. I have thought, while these holy sounds arose, that the bleat of the flocks became softer, the cry of the plover less shrill, and that the divine melody subdued into music the rough brawling of the brook along which it was heard.

At the heathy entrance into one of these beautiful vales I accordingly stood and pursued the winding of a little stream, which, after leaping over two or three small crags, and forming several little bleaching grounds of greensward for the villagers' webs, gathered all its waters together, and concentrated all its might, to pour itself on a solitary mill-wheel at the farther end of the valley. On either side of the glen the shepherds and husbandmen had each constructed his homely abode, according to his own fancy; the houses were dropped here

and there at random, facing east, and west, and south, each attached to its own little garden, the green flourishing of which was pleasant to the eye, while the fragrance of some sweet herbs, or a few simple flowers, escaped from the enclosure, and was wafted about me by the low and fitful wind. The whole glen was full of life, the sickles were moving beneath the ripe grain, the bandsmen were binding and stooking it, several low-wheeled cars were busied in depositing this rustic treasure in the farmer's stackyard; while the farmer himself moved about, surveyed the fulfilment of his wishes, and rubbed the full ears between his palms, and examined with a pleased and a curious eye the quality of his crop. At the doors of the cottages the old dames sat in groups in the sun, twirling their distaffs, and driving the story round of wonder or of scandal; while an unsummable progeny of barefooted bairns ran, and rolled, and leaped, and tumbled, and laughed, and screamed, till the whole glen remurmured with the din.

I sat down by the side of a flat grave-stone, bedded level with the grass; the ancient inscription, often renewed by the pious villagers, told that beneath it lay one of those enthusiastic, undaunted, and persecuted peasants, who combated for freedom of faith and body when the nobles of the land forgot the cause of God and their country. Presently the children desisted from their merriment, and gathered about and gazed on me, a man of an unknown glen, with a quiet and a curious eye. I ever loved the innocent scrutiny of youthful eyes; so I allowed them to descant at freedom on my southland garb, and wonder what could make me choose my seat by the martyr's tomb-stone, a place seldom visited, save by men in a devotional frame of mind. A venerable old dame, with a straggling tress or two of grey hair flowing from beneath her mutch or coif, laid aside her distaff, and advanced to free me from the intrusion of a dozen or more of her curly-headed descendants. The admonishing

tone in which she said, "Bairns, bairns!" with the rebuke of her eye, accomplished her wishes; the children vanished from my side, and retired to a little round green knowe or knoll, which rose on the rivulet bank in the middle of the village, and seemed appropriated for rustic games, pitching the bar, casting the stone, for leaping and for wrestling. "A bonnie harvest afternoon, sir," said the Galwegian matron, "but ye would be wiser to come and rest ye in a comfortable house than sit on the cauld stane, though it lies aboon the dust of ane of the godly auld folk of the saintly days of Galloway, or may-be ye might like the change-house better to birl yere sixpence, and be behadden to none, and I cannot say that I can advise ye."

I was prevented from replying by another of the village dames, who thus broke in on our parley.—"Birl his silver in the change-house!—wherefore should he? what can hinder him from slipping cannilie away up the brae to the gudeman of Warlsworm?

he's either dead, or as good as dead; and if he's no departed, so much the better; he will leave the world with a perturbed spirit, for sore, sore, has he stuck to the earth, and loth will he be to leave his gowd and his gains, and his bonnie broad lairdships; and who kens but the sight of a stranger breaking his bread and drinking his milk may make him die through downright vexation for the unwonted waste? Andrew, my bonnie lad, take this strange man up to auld Warlsworm's hall door; I would gang myself, but I vowed never to cross his threshold or enter his land, since he cheated my ain cousin out of the green holms of Dee; black be his cast, and bitter his doom!"

A little boy came to my side, and put his hand in mine; and, willing to know more of a man of whom I had heard so much, away I walked with my barefooted guide, and soon came within sight of the mansion of Warlsworm.

It was a rough old house, built of un-

dressed granite, and covered with a slating of coarse sandstone. The smoke, despairing to find its way through the windings of a chimney almost choked with sides of bacon and soot, sought its passage in many a curl and turn along the roof, and, finally descending, streamed out into the pure air through window and door. Groups of black cattle, after browzing on every green thing which the garden contained, and trying to digest the withered thatch which depended from the sides of the barn and stable, stood lowing knee-deep in a pool of muddy water before the mansion, and looking wistfully on the green hills and the golden harvest around them. The fowls, undismayed by foumart or fox, plundered the corn which hung drop-ripe and unreaped in the field; while a multitude of swine, breaking, in the desperation of hunger, from their pens, ran grunting through the standing grain, crushed the growing potatoes in unwieldy joy, and finally cooled their sides, and fulfilled the Scripture proverb, by wallowing in the mire

which encompassed as with a fosse this miserable mansion.

The door stood open. In summer, in the pastoral districts, few doors are closed; and, with the privilege which a stranger claims in a hospitable land, I entered the house. Wheeled towards the fire, and bedded thick with sheepskins and soft cushions, stood the lang settle, or rustic sofa; and on it lay a man bald and feeble with age; and kneeling by his side, I saw a fair-haired girl, her hands clasped, and her large blue eyes fixed with a moist and motionless gaze on his face. This was the owner of the mansion, the far-famed Laird of Warlsworm; and the maid was his niece, as remarkable for her gentleness and beauty, as her relative for his grasping and incessant greed. As my shadow darkened the floor, she looked up, and motioned me to silence and a seat. I accordingly sat down, and looked with an eye of deep interest on the touching scene before me. There lay Age, his face gross and covetous, his mind seek-

ing communion with the riches of the earth, while his body was fast hasting to dust, and his soul to its final account; and there knelt Youth, glowing in health and ripe in beauty, her tresses bright, and flowing over her neck, like sunshine visiting a bank of lilies; her hands, white and shapely, and small, clasped over a white and a perturbed bosom; while from her long dark eye-lashes the tears of sorrow descended drop by drop. On both, a young man in a homely garb, but with a face comely and interesting, sat and looked, and looked too with a brow on which might be read more of love for the maid, than of sorrow for the man.

The old man uttered a groan, turned on his couch, half opened his eyes, and said, "Bessie, my bairn, let me have hold of thy hand; my sight is not so good as it ought to be; and I think I see queer things, that should not be seen by a man when he lies down to die. But I have wronged no man; I took but what the law gave me; and if the law grips with an iron hand, it's the worse for

them that made it. I thought I heard the footstep of the young portioner of Glaiketha; he'll be come to borrow gold and to wadset land. But Bessie, my lass, gold's scarce, and land abundant; no that I refuse the minted money when the interest will do thee good, and when the security's sicker; sae gang thy ways, my wean, to the old pose ahint the cathud, or hear ye me; there's a saddle-bag of good red gold riding on the rannel-tree that has nae seen sun or wind these seven-and-twenty summers."

"Oh! forget the cares of the world," said the maiden, with a voice smothering with sorrow, "and think of your health. This is not the young portioner of Glaiketha seeking for gold to cast away in eating, and drinking, and dancing, or in more evil pursuits; but a stranger youth come to repose him all night as strangers do, and recommence his journey in the morning."

"Repose him!" re-echoed the old man, his voice deepening, and his faded eyes brightening, as he spoke. "Have I wranged

any of his kin, that he comes hither to riot on my substance? Have I ever darkened his father's door, that he should presume to darken mine? Alas! alas! the bonnie haughs of Orr, and the fair holms of Dee, will be wasted on loons and limmers, and I shall no find repose where all men find rest. Ay! ay! my hall will soon be a changed place; there will be fizzenless tea instead of weel buttered breakfast brose; a pudding with spices and raisins, for a gallant haggis dropping with fatness, and full of marrowy strength; and for the pleasant din of the spinning wheel there will be the sounding of fiddle-strings, and the leaping of wanton feet. Strangers will feast at my supper-board, where strangers never feasted before; and auld men will shake their heads and say, 'Away fly the riches of honest Warlsworm.'"

And putting his hands over his eyes, as if to hide the hideous picture of extravagance which his imagination had painted, and uttering groan succeeding groan, he

stretched himself at full length on the lang settle.

His niece turned pale as she beheld him writhing under the infliction of the spirit which she mistook for a deadlier pang, and thus she addressed the young man, who seemed to remain there that he might gaze without intermission on her beauty. "Oh, Willie, lad, if ye wish for wealth in this world, and weal in the ane to come — rise up, and run."

The youth leaped to his feet, stood with his lips apart, his left foot forward, and his whole face beaming with joy at being commanded by so sweet a tongue.—"Oh run, William, run; fly over moor and moss, and seek and bring auld Haudthegrup, a man gifted in prayer, and conversant with godly things; he will cheer my uncle's spirit. For oh, they're gladsome when they get thegither. I have seen them sit in the howe heart of winter, laying schemes for gripping and guiding wealth, when the snow was on the hill, and the icicle on the house-side,

with less fire to thowe them than would warm a bairn's breakfast. Oh! run, William, run, tell him to hasten; for the sands of life are nearly out; and that my uncle talks of the gathered gold of faith, and the set siller of redemption; and that's nae symptom of health with him."

The youth looked at her for a moment, then away he darted from the door, climbed the hill with the swiftness of a fowl in its flight, tarried for a second on its summit, to look back on the dwelling, nor were his glances unrewarded; he then vanished along the moor, to seek the home of auld Haudthegrup.

This devotional auxiliary soon made his appearance; he seemed a personification of penance and famine. He was tall and lean, with a frame of iron, a forehead villanous low, and eyes small, restless, and glimmering about in quest of gain, like those of a cat seeking prey in the twilight. His nose was sharp and thin, like the style of a sun-dial; while his lips, though very broad,

were too scanty to cover a seam of teeth as rusty as the jaws of an unused fox-trap, and wholly unacquainted with the luxury of the pastoral district, the flesh of lambs or ewes, unless when a friend's house had the scourge of his company. He carried under his arm a mighty Bible, garnished with massy clasps of iron; and entered the abode of his dying friend with the satisfied look of a man proud of his gifts, and conscious of the extensive influence of his intercessions. — "Peace be among you," said the goodman of Haudthegrup, "and may God claim his ain in his blessed time and way; when the grain's ready let it go to the threshing floor, and when the grapes are ripe, take them to the wine-press." — So saying, he made a stride or two, and, looking in the face of his ancient friend, thus proceeded to comfort him.

"Bless me, Laird of Warlsworm! ye're no going to leave us; leaving us, too, when golden days are at hand? Never was there such an appearance of a harvest of gold,

and the precious things of the earth, all ripening and getting ready for thy sickle and mine. Cheer up, man, ye'll hear the chink of gold in yere left lug for mony a bonnie year yet. Would ye lie there, and let the breath sough away frae atween your lips, like a cow strangled with her tether in a field knee-deep of clover? Look me in the face, I say; bankers are breaking, and the credit of cattle-dealers is cracked — gold will be gold soon, and the rate of interest will rise in Galloway. The crouse and ringing frosts of winter will soon come to purify the air, and make yere auld blood course boldly in yere veins. Then the grass will grow green, the bushes will bud, and the primroses will blow on the bonnie burn bank, and ye'll get yere feet among the braw blooming gowans, that lie scattered o'er the face of the earth, like as mony pieces of a spendthrift's gold. Sae cheer up, man, ye would do wrong to die, and so many blessings awaiting ye."

The Laird of Warlsworm sat erect for a

moment; the prospect of life, and the hopes of future gain, passed by him like a bright pageant; his eyes sparkled with that unholy light by which Mammon sums his treasure, and he stretched forth his hand to clutch the visionary gold, which deceitful fancy heaped up before him. But nature could not sustain the effort; the light faded in his eyes, his hand sank, and his head declined, and, sinking on the cushions, he muttered, "Na, na, it winna do; it winna do; I maun away to the worms, and my bits of bonnie gold will get a fearful scattering;" and fixing his looks on the old bag of coin, which was suspended in the chimney, he lay for a while in woeful rumination, and thus proceeded: — "Aye, aye, ye'll no hang lang in that cozie place now; the hand of the spoiler will come, and thy braw broad pieces which I gathered with care and with sorrow, and regarded as gods, will gang to the silk shop and the maker of golden gimcracks, glancing with polished stones for woman's neck and bosom." — And

shutting his eyes in despair, and clutching his hands in agony of spirit, he resigned himself to his fate.

Meanwhile the devout twin-brother of Mammon seated himself in an old chair, laid his Bible on his knees, uncovered his head, placed his long iron fingers on the clasps, and, with a prolonged preliminary cough, which hypocrisy had taught to imitate the listless and weary end of a dull sectarian sermon, he opened the volume. He glanced his eye around, to see if his auditors were composed, and commenced his search for a chapter befitting the perilous state of his friend. I was seated beside him, and thus I heard him converse with himself, as he turned over the leaves: — "A chapter fit for a sinner's state! — I mauna read about repentance, nor speak of the benefits of redemption. He'll never forgive me for directing his thoughts to such strange objects."

The Laird uttered a low groan, and the devout man proceeded with his mutterings.

— "He's going gear; he's going gear; he winna shoot over the coming midnight; he'll be a stretched-out corse, and Bessie Lamond, his niece there, a braw rich heiress before the morning light. She'll be a weel tochered lass, when auld Gripagain travels. Let me see,—there's Hurleyhawkie, a rich land and well watered; there's Auchenling, a dreary domain, it's true, but there's gallant shooting on't, though it bears little but cranberries; then there's Wyliehole, and the sixteen acre parks of Warlsworm; forbye bails and bonds, and gathered gold; — my sooth Bessie, my lass, many a gallant will cast his cap at thee." And he glanced his sharp considerate eyes on the young maiden, to whose mind her uncle's danger seemed alone present. — "Aye, aye," he resumed, "she's a wellfavoured lass, and I'll warrant has a gift of knowing on't; de'il a doubt of that; but I am not so very auld, and have been single for seven year, and, bating a sad cough, which I can mend, when I like, for sixpence, and sundry grey

hairs, the lass may have sillier woosters than me. When I cock my bonnet, and put on my crousest coat, and give my horse a tasting of corn, and then a tasting of the spur, I think the quean will no be a draps-blood to her uncle if she say me nay. And the lassie, too, is modest of demeanour; she wears nae silver in her shoon, nor frights the fowls with the feathers of her cap; and weel I mind it was her thrifty mother's boast, that she should never sit on a sark till she could spin ane. I'll warrant her a gallant lassie, and a gude guider of gear. I should like to lead her to a brankan bridal." And, resuming his search of a suitable chapter, he withdrew his looks from the maid, who, with brimful eyes, a troubled brow, and quivering hands, ministered to the sick man.

Her pure sincerity of heart won its way to auld Warlsworm's bosom, frozen as it seemed, and shut up resolutely against the charities of nature. — "Ah, Bessie, lass," he murmured, "thy uncle maun leave the

bonnie links of Orr, and the gowany brae-sides of Dee. Many a tug, and many a toiled brow, has it cost him to get them; but the strength of man cannot endure like the hills, nor his spirit flow for ever, like a running stream. And talking of running streams, that reminds me that Miller Macmillan owes me a year's rent, past on Tuesday; gar Jack Candlish gang and fetch it: the miller's a sicker ane; he thinks my dam is nearly run, and that my wheel of existence lacks the water of life, and sae he'll keep up the rent till my head's happit, and then wheedle or swear thee out on't. So that's settled, and my spirit's all the calmer for it. And now for thee, lass, ye'll be a rich quean, Bessie, and the lads will like ye nae the waur because he who lived before ye had a gathering eye, and a sicker grip. But ye maun never wear a towering bonnet with a long feather; for that is an abomination in devout eyes, and a sad drain for the pocket; and sair I slighted bonnie Jenny Duff for the pride of her apparel: wear the snood of maiden

singleness as lang as ye can, lassie; and, if ye maun be a wife, wear a douce hood, or a devout mutch; ye'll find ane of yere grandmother's treasured by among my bonds; for I loved my ain mother better than ever I loved gold; ye'll hardly credit that, Bessie; and I love thee, too, my ain sweet sister's wean."

He laid his arms around her neck, looked full in her face, with a kind and a glistening eye, and the demon of lucre spread his wings, to forsake the mansion where he had lived so long. But it was otherwise ordered. The poor weeping girl knelt over him, and wiped away from his face the tears which flowed from her own eyes, for tears never flowed from his, and hid her face in his bosom with many a bitter sob.

"Ah, ye waster hussey!" exclaimed the Laird, in a tone above his strength, "wherefore wipe ye my face with a damask napkin, when a cloth three threads to the pound is too good for a wadset about to be redeemed like me? And see, as I hope to be saved, if ye are not consuming the good dry wood

which I kept for the cozie winter night; ground-elding (dried turf) is good enough to warm such an old sapless bough as me, which the feller's axe is fast lopping away from the green tree of existence."

This appearance of unwonted profusion smote sore on the heart of the parsimonious old man, and in a tone of rebuke and bitterness he continued his discourse. — "I may waste my breath — and I ought to leave some for a scrap of prayer, it may help me where I am going; I may waste my breath, Bess, I say, in counselling ye how to choose a husband. When a woman's eye is bright, her ear is deaf. Take not a man, Bess, who counts kindred four generations back; he'll call his ancestor a gentleman, and spill the brimming cup of thy fortune in justifying his descent. Nor yet marry a man who scorns his ancestors; the man who mocks his forefathers, tramples on their dust. I hold a father's fair name equal with hoarded siller. Above all things wed not a lawyer, lass; ye should aye strive

to mend your fortune, and better your fame. Think not of a sailor, for he thinks there is no Sunday in five fathoms of water, and finds a love in every land. Shun, too, the soldier, for shining scarlet, golden shoulder-knots, and a hat filled with fowls' feathers, will consume thy gold, and fly away with thy happiness; and, oh, what a gowk he maun be, who stands up to be shot at for saxpence a day, Sunday included! But marry, lass, for all women love to be married, were it only for the sake of having somebody to scold at, and to bear the fault for their folly, — wed, I say, a strong-handed chield, who can keep the crown of the causeway, and make himself be obeyed at his own fire-side. A cannie homely lad, who can clip seven score of sheep while another clips six; kens the buttered frae the bare side of the bread; loves nought so well as his own wife, but the knotting of his own purse-strings; and who fears the Lord, and can back five bushels of barley."

This grave and worldly counsellor fairly

exhausted himself, and, laying his head on the cushion, and fixing his eye on his bag of gold, which common fame calculated at a thousand pieces, remained silent while that devout person, Haudthegrup, commenced family devotion. He had examined the New Testament for a fitting and seemly text; but the divine meekness, and charity, and self-denial, and scorn of all terrestrial grandeur, which inspire its pages, rejected all community of feeling, and obliged him to seek consolation under the splendid and ostentatious dispensations of the Mosaic law.

"Spoiling the Egyptians," I heard him mutter, as he hastened along, "the heathen Egyptians of their jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, a meritorious deed;—making the molten calf, a piece of dark idolatry, and a waste of precious metal;—spoiling the Amalekite, a rich and a pagan people, a pleasant act and an acceptable. The temple, aye, aye, the temple of Solomon, the roof thereof was of fine cedar, the

pillars of ivory, the floor of pure silver, and the walls of beaten gold, — this has often consoled me, and, doubtless, will console him. It would be pleasant to die with a vision of this golden palace before him." Here he raised his head, and said audibly: "Let us begin the worship of Him on High, by reading in his praise first Kings, chapter the sixth." And, elevating his voice, he chanted forth the history of the building of Solomon's temple, adorning it with the prolonged tone and quavering grace-notes of an ancient Cameronian professor. Nor did he fail to express his own admiration at the profusion of precious metal, by dwelling, with a delight that seemed unwilling to depart, on the passages recording the overlayings of the wall with gold, and the altar, and the floor. As he proceeded, the eye of old Warlsworm looked on his own sooty rafters, and on his coarse unhewn floor, and on the ark which contained his meal; yet what were they, covered, as his imagination made

them, with beaten gold, compared to the immeasurable riches of the Jewish temple! Devotion fell prostrate before the divinity of wealth, and the man who had not five hours to live, leaped to his feet, smote his hands together, and exclaimed, "Oh Lord, what, o' gowd! what, o' gowd!"

"Aye, lad, and pure gowd too," responded Haudthegrup, casting the Bible from him as he spoke, and pacing round the room with a proud look and an augmented stride.

At this lamentable conclusion to family worship and intercession for the soul of a departing sinner, the beauteous relation of Warlsworm seemed deeply affected and incensed. She caught the Laird in her arms, replaced him on his cushions, soothed down his worldly spirit, and wiped from his face the moisture which disease and excitement had brought to his brow, and that, too, with a cloth of a texture very unlike the fine twined linen and needle-work of Egypt which had contributed to this unseemly rapture. While this passed,

I observed the shadow of a man, lengthened by the departing sun, moving on the hall-floor, and seeming to whirl round and round with the agility of a dancer. I looked about, and beheld a singular being, a man about the age of fifty, clad in coarse cloth, called by the shepherds hiplock plaiden, bare-foot, bare-legged, bare-necked, and bare-headed. About his shoulders hung a mass of withered and matted hair; and he carried in his hand a long straw, which he held up before his face, moving all the while round and round, and accompanying his gestures with wild and disjointed words.

"Alas, alas!" said the young maiden, "what can have brought that poor demented simpleton here? He knows our doors were ever closed against him, and that our meal never augmented the little store which he obtained, more by the intercession of his own innocent face, than by the intreaty of his tongue, from the scrupulous charity of our neighbours. Ah,

poor houseless, homeless, hapless creature! he is come to express the sorrow of his own harmless heart for the illness of the head of this house; and hame shall he not go without partaking of the mercies with which we have been so long blessed." And with meat and drink in her hands forth she walked, and approached, not without hesitation, to the little green knoll on which the poor maniac had stationed himself, in order perhaps to give greater effect to the singular ceremony he was performing.

"East and west, and north and south," he chanted in a tone of dissonance equal to the croak of the raven — "east, west, north, and south; not a cloud — not a breath of wind — a burning heat, and a scorching drouth — the grasshopper cannot sing for want of her evening dew." He paused, and reversed the straw, and, holding it up before him, renewed his dancing and his chant. "North, south, west, and east, the morning sun cannot ascend for

the concourse of clouds — the little streams sing among their pebbles, for their banks will soon be overflowed, and the little flowers, bless their bonnie faces, hold up their parched heads, rejoicing in the descending shower. The rains fall, the winds blow, the rivulets swell, and the thunders roll, and rock the green hills. The wide and winding water — even the links of my bright and stately Orr — flows like a wild and a raging sea. I see it, I see it, I see it; man may not ride it; and the saddled steed neighs across the flood, which it trembles to take. Ah! I would not go to be buried in the old kirk-yard, beyond that roaring river, though ye were to make me a bed three ell deep, and lay the greenest turf in Galloway aboon me."

"Gawain, Gawain," said Bessie Lamond, in her sweetest tone, and with a smile of sympathy and kindness on her lips, "Gawain — hinnie, have ye forgotten how many bowls of curds and cream, and pieces of bread and cheese, I have stolen from our

penurious board to feed ye in the glen? Turn and speak to me, my bonnie man, and spae nae mair about uncannie things, and see nae mair unsonsie sights."

But Gawain was possessed beyond the influence of the tongue and charms of the fair niece of the penurious Laird, and continued to elevate and dandle the straw with an increasing wildness of look and gesture. "But who are those who ride mourning on their coal black steeds, two and two, and bear a coffined corse before them? I see some whom I shall not see long, and the owner of this house is among them; stretched full gay in his burial linen, and a velvet pall aboon him — the siller it costs would be a sore sight; it is well for him that his senses are shut, else the expense of the burial wine would break his heart. There is a deep grave dug, and the bedral leans on his spade, and looks to the burial train about to pass the river. Aha! Johnnie Feastheworm, ye're cheated, lad, ye're cheated," shouted Gawain, changing the

wild seriousness of his tone to that of laughter and merriment. "Fill your kirk-yard hole again with the black mools, for auld Warlsworm's floating down the links of Orr, and his bonnie black coffin will frighten the seamen on Solway; and wha should float aside him but auld Haudthegrup? but he'll no float far, for twa pouchfuls of stolen gowd will tug the sinner down, and sink him to perdition: ye're cheated, Johnnie Feastheworm, ye're cheated, sae fill yere kirk-yard hole with the fat mools again, my cannie man."

These concluding words were too loud to escape notice, and out upon him sallied Haudthegrup, his face inflamed, his hand clenched, and burning anger on his tongue. "What fiend hath possessed himself of this man, and utters this falseness through his foolish lips? Verily, I will cast him out; a sore buffeting shall the foul thief abide, that presumes to enter into the living image of the High One, and prophesy against righteous men. Lo! I will rebuke him with my

right hand, and chasten him sorely with this rod of rowan tree, with which I once combated and overcame three witch-women in the wicked parish of Penpont." And, advancing upon Gawain, as he spoke, he aimed a blow, which the maniac turned aside, exclaiming: "Aha! auld greedy Haudthegrup, I have ye now, I have ye now; take that, man, for throwing a bone at me, at Joe Tamson's bridal, seven and thirty years syne come beltan." As he uttered these words, he dashed his opponent from him with such force, that he reeled several paces, and plunged into a miry hole, fairly under the verdant mantle with which the summer warmth had decked it. Gawain, having performed this feat, stalked perpendicularly into the hall — seated himself by the warm ashes on the hearth, and, looking on the sick man, said, "Ye lie soft and braw on your bonnie white cushions there; and deed and trouth, an I was you, I wad nae die till the cauld frost and winter should come, when I care na to accompany ye to the

kirk-yard hole mysel, and take my word for't, ye'll lie saftest and fealest on the Buittle side of the kirk; I aye think the gowans are bonnier, and the grass the fairer, and the blinks of the simmer sun sweeter on that side than the other: 'od, but lad, if ye hope to lie wi' me, ye maun lie quiet, and nae trouble ane with your weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth — the cauld grave's a bad place to repent in."

We were now rejoined by old Haudthegrup, purified by the fair hands of the maiden from the soil of the pond, and anxious to drown shame and mortification by a long and lamentable prayer. The sun was set, and a soft and balmy twilight had succeeded. The sound of the reaper's returning song, and the repeated call of the harvest-horn, were audible on all sides, — and in the hall of Warlsworm we had that silence which ushers in prayer, and that fitful and glimmering light afforded by the decaying beams of day, and the twinkling

gleam of fading embers. As we knelt, I could not refrain from looking on the singular group thus strangely assembled.

Gawain, abasing himself in the ashes, and stooping his forehead quietly into the dust, accompanied with a chorusing groan the melancholy cough of the sick man; the maiden knelt by the couch, watching with a steady and uninterrupted gaze the changing looks of her uncle; while Haudthegrup himself clasped his hands, drew down his cheeks to a most hypocritical length, and, fixing his eyes on things above, namely, on the golden hoard which hung beyond reach in the chimney, proceeded with his prayer. The prayers of the righteous avail much, says the Fountain of Belief, but what avail the prayers of the hypocrite? Unwise would that man be who would give them a record and a sanctuary. A strong and a burning faith, a day of firm belief, and an hour of deathbed repentance, were pressed with many a mighty word and many a weary groan. He recom-

mended the health of his friend to Him who sweetened the waters of Marah, and his spirit to that Being who presided over angels and thrones, and the souls of just men made perfect. "To thee," said he, making a concluding address to the Fountain of all glory, "to thee, who can make silver into gold, and the dust upon which we tread into precious gems, it can be little to mend a broken body and revive a contrite spirit. To thee, who made my lambs worth five half-crowns at the St. James's fair of Lanark, though when I supplicated thee they were worth but five and sixpence, the renovation of this frail and fainting man is but a breath from thy nostrils. But if it is thy will to glean this ripened ear, to snatch this brand from the fires of this sinful world, let him honour thee and serve thee, and leave a moiety of that worldly dross which men call gold, even unto him who thus wrestled with thee for his welfare and salvation." Here the sick man moaned, and the glances of his

gifted friend and him flashed towards the hidden gold like the hostile lights of two adverse planets. Haudthegrup concluded, "and, leaving his red gold in thy servant's hand, let him dwell in that house not built with hands, eternal in the heavens."

"A house not built with hands," re-echoed Gawain in the tone of the prayer, and leaping to his feet, "I never saw a house not built with hands except a magpie-nest in the foot of my mother's garden." With him, too, rose the Laird of Warlsworm, the deadly paleness of rage and receding life in his face; he fixed his eyes, shining with a light that seemed of the world below, on Haudthegrup, and stretching his hands towards him to pour forth his departing malediction, seemed inspired by the fiend who presides over the last hours of evil men. He opened his lips, the curse trembled on his tongue; but words never came, for he was stricken speechless, and fell back on the settle, his lips apart, his eyes fixed, and his hands clenched. "He'll

never hound me frae his door mair," said Gawain, "nor tell me that wet straw is owre good a bed for a beggar bodie."

"Let us carry him into the spence," said Haudthegrup, "his spirit winna part in peace while his eye is fixed on that dross called gold, and his worldly goods." The dying man seized his niece's hand, and pointed to several bags which hung among hams and tongues in the chimney. "Ah, he's making an edifying hinder end," said his parsimonious friend, "his hopes are with things aboon, with the blessed, doubtless." And away he bore him amid some faint resistance to a little secluded chamber, his hands still stretched towards the chimney, and his lips moving with the rapidity of one who speaks in haste. His dumb warnings were all in vain.

"Now, my bonnie young lady of Warlsworm," said this sanctified person in a whisper, "watch over the last moments of the righteous, and let these two youths and this simple innocent attend you; verily,

they may profit by such an edifying sight; I, even I, a man dead to the things of this earth, will go and kneel down even where I lately knelt, and my intercession shall arise and go upward for the welfare of the body, and the glorification of the spirit."

The maiden wept, and, half insensible with sorrow, bathed her cheeks in tears, while away strode the comforter to the hall, and presently his voice arose in vehement intercession — the sick man groaned. In a little while, the sound of the prayer seemed to ascend from the floor, the Laird made a convulsive effort to rise, the voice of Haudthegrup quavered and hesitated, as the voice of a man will do when his hands are busied, and then the sound as of gold falling was heard. At this mishap, the tongue of the interceder uttered a curse, and the power of speech returning to the dying man, he smote his hands together and exclaimed, "He's herrying me, he's herrying me, and I maun gang to the brim-

stone pit with no a penny in my pocket," and with these words he expired.

The singular prophecy of Gawain met with a remarkable fulfilment. The day of the burial of the Laird was wild and stormy, the place of interment was in an old churchyard on the south side of the river Orr. The mourners were mounted, and the coffin was borne on horses' necks, covered with a pall of black velvet, the parochial mortcloth, which reached nigh to the ground. Haudthegrup was chief mourner, and, to elude the expense of a toll-bar, he proposed to ford the river, red and swollen with rain. When he reached the middle of the stream, his horse, unaccustomed to such processions, startled and plunged, and fairly flung his rider over his ears. In his fall, he seized the coffin of Warlsworm, and the quick and the dead alike found a grave in the links of the Orr.

"Alas, for Haudthegrup!" said one of the mourners, "watch when he swims, and let us try to save him."

"Swims!" rejoined another mourner, "how think ye will he swim, and seven hundred stolen pieces of Warlsworm's gold in his pocket? I'll prophesy when his body's found, he'll be holding his hands on his breeches-pockets to preserve his treasure."

THE SEVEN FORESTERS OF CHATSWORTH:

AN ANCIENT DERBYSHIRE BALLAD.

In presenting this somewhat rude but curious ballad to the reader, it may be proper to observe, that those who profess to be charmed with truth only, and would wish one to swear to the certainty of a song, will learn with pleasure, perhaps, that tradition has recited, or sung, I know not which, this singular legend, for centuries, in the beautiful vale of Derwent, in Derbyshire. It is a tale current in the county. The projecting rock in Chatsworth wood, still bearing the name of the Shouter's Stone, is pointed out by the peasantry as the place on which this famous and successful Outlaw stood and shouted. It overhangs a wild and winding footpath in the Preserve, and in former times, before the wood became so luxuriant, commanded a fine view of the valley, in the midst of which stands Chatsworth-house, the favourite mansion of the ancient and noble

family of Cavendish. In the house itself, this tale has sought sanctuary. There is a painting from no less a hand than that of Prince Nicolas, in which a portion of the tradition is sought to be embodied; but the illustrious artist has, with poetical license, put a gilded horn in the Outlaw's hand; and, with a departure from the story, which all lovers of oral literature will deplore, has given to the cavern below a couple of outlaws, who rouse and bestir themselves to the sound of their leader's horn. The ancient oaks of Chatsworth are to be found every where in the valley; and, perhaps, no oaks in England, except those in Sherwood Forest, can claim to be their coevals, — they are upwards of a thousand years old.

Chatsworth has many other attractions. The Flower Garden of the beautiful and unfortunate Queen of Scotland, a plat of earth elevated on a squat tower, and guarded with a foss, stands on the banks of the Derwent, within a stone's throw of the

house. All around, the hills ascend and recede in woody or naked magnificence; and indeed the grandeur of nature is such, that the beautiful mansion is diminished in the contemplation.

An attempt was made to abate the occasional provincialism of the ballad, but the experiment threatened to ravel the entire web, and it was not persisted in.

BALLAD.

1.

The sun had risen above the mist,
The boughs in dew were dreeping;
Seven foresters sat on Chatsworth bank,
And sung while roes were leaping.

2.

Alas! sung one, for Chatsworth oaks,
Their heads are bald and hoary,
They droop in fulness of honour and fame,
They have had their time of glory.

3.

No stately tree in old merry England
Can match their antique grandeur;
Tradition can tell of no time when they
Tower'd not in pride and splendour.

4.

How fair they stand amid their green land,
The sock or share ne'er pain'd them;
Not a bough or leaf have been shred from their strength,
Nor the woodman's axe profaned them.

5.

Green, sung another, were they that hour
When Scotland's loveliest woman,
And saddest queen, in the sweet twilight,
Aneath their boughs was roamin'.

6.

And ever the Derwent lilies her tears
In their silver tops were catching,
As she look'd to the cold and faithless north,
Till her eyes wax'd dim with watching.

7.

Be mute now, the third forester said,
The dame who fledged mine arrow
With the cygnet's wing, has a whiter hand
Than the fairest maid on Yarrow.

8.

Loud laugh'd the forester fourth, and sung,
Say not thy maid's the fair one;
On the banks of Dove there dwells my love,
A beauteous and a rare one.

9.

Now cease your singing, the fifth one said,
And choose of shafts the longest,
And seek the bucks on Chatsworth chase,
Where the lady-bracken's strongest.

10.

Let every bow be strung, and smite
The fattest and the fairest;
Lord Devonshire will taste our cheer,
Of England's lords the rarest.

11.

String them with speed, the sixth man said,
For low down in the forest
There runs a deer I long to smite,
With bitter shafts the sorest.

12.

The bucks bound blythe on Chatsworth lea,
Where brackens grow the greenest;
The pheasant's safe 'neath Chatsworth oaks,
When the tempest sweeps the keenest.

13.

The fawn is fain as it sucks its dam,
The bird is blythe when hatching;
Saint George! such game was never seen,
With seven such fellows watching.

14.

In the wild wood of fair Dove dwells
An Outlaw, young and handsome;
A sight of him on Chatsworth bank
Were worth a prince's ransom.

15.

He slew the deer on Hardwick-hill,
And left the keeper sleeping
The sleep of death; late — late yestreen
I heard his widow weeping.

16.

Now bend your bows, and choose your shafts,—
His string at his touch went sighing;
The Outlaw comes — now, now at his breast
Let seven broad shafts be flying.

17.

The Outlaw came — with a song he came —
Green was his gallant cleeding*;
A horn at his belt, in his hand the bow
That set the roebucks bleeding.

* *Cleeding*, a word still used in the north of England; clothing, apparel. South of Germany, *kleidung*; Islandic, *klaede*; Teutonic, *kleed*.

18.

The Outlaw came — with a song he came —
O'er a brow more brent and bonny
The pheasant plume ne'er danced and shone,
In a summer morning sunny.

19.

The Outlaw came — at his belt, a blade
Broad, short, and sharp was gleamin';
Free was his step as one who had ruled
Among knights and lovely women.

20.

See, by his shadow in the stream
He loves to look and linger,
And wave his mantle richly flower'd
By a white and witching finger.

21.

Now, shall I hit him where yon gay plume
Of the Chatsworth pheasant's glancing;
Or shall I smite his shapely limbs
That charm our maidens dancing?

22.

Hold! hold! a northern forester said,
'Twill be told from Trent to Yarrow,
How the true-love song of a gentle Outlaw
Was stay'd by a churl's arrow.

23.

It shall never be said, quoth the forester then,
That the song of a red-deer reaver
Could charm the bow that my grandsire bent
On the banks of Guadalquiver.

24.

And a shaft he laid, as he spoke, to the string,
When the Outlaw's song came falling
As sweet on his ear, as the wind when it comes
Through the fragrant woodlands calling.

25.

There each man stood, with his good bow bent,
And his shaft pluck'd from the quiver:
While thus then sung that gallant Outlaw,
Till rung both rock and river:

26.

Oh! bonny Chatsworth, and fair Chatsworth,
Thy bucks go merrily bounding;
Aneath your green oaks, as the herds flew past,
How oft have my shafts been sounding!

27.

It is sweet to meet with the one we love,
When the night is nigh the hoarest;
It is sweet to bend the bow as she bids,
On the proud prey of the forest.

28.

One fair dame loves the cittern's sound,
When the words of love are winging;
But my fair one's music 's the Outlaw's horn,
And his bow-string sharply singing.

29.

She waves her hand — her little white hand,
'Tis a spell to each who sees her;
One glance of her eye — and I snatch my bow,
And let fly my shafts to please her.

30.

I bring the lark from the morning cloud,
When its song is at the sweetest;
I stay the deer upon Chatsworth lea,
When its flight is at the fleetest.

31.

There's magic in the wave of her hand,
And her dark eye rains those glances,
Which fill the best and the wisest hearts
With love's sweet influences.

32.

Her locks are brown — bright berry brown,
O'er her temples white descending;
And her neck is like the neck of the swan,
As her way through heaven she's wending.

33.

How I have won my way to her heart
Is past all men's discernin';
For she is lofty, and I am low,
My lovely Julia Vernon.

34.

He turned him right and round about,
With a step both long and lordly;
When he was aware of those foresters bold,
And he bore him wondrous proudly.

35.

Good morrow, good fellows! all fearless he said,
Was your supper spread so sparely;
Or is it to feast some sweet young dame,
That you bend your bows so early?

36.

The world is wide, and the world is broad,
There's fish in the smallest river;
Deer leap on the hill — fowls fly in the air, —
Was, is, and will be ever.

37.

And now I feast on the ptarmigan,
And then I taste the pheasant;
And my supper is of the Chatsworth fawn,
Which my love dresses pleasant.

38.

But tomorrow I feast on yon bonny roebuck;
'Tis time I stay'd his bounding;
He twang'd his string — like the swallow it sung,
All shrilly and sharply sounding.

39.

By my grandsire's bow, said a forester then,
By my shafts which fly so yarely,
And by all the skill of my strong right hand,
Good Outlaw, thou lords it rarely.

40.

Seest thou yon tree, yon lonely tree,
Whose bough the Derwent's laving? —
Upon its top, thou gallant Outlaw,
Thou'lt be hung to feed the raven.

41.

So short as the time this sharp shaft flies,
And strikes yon golden pheasant —
There — thy time is meted, so bid farewell
To these greenwoods wild and pleasant.

42.

The Outlaw laugh'd; Good fellow, he said,
My sword 's too sure a servant
To suffer that tree to bear such fruit,
While it stands on the Derwent.

43.

She would scorn my might, my own true love,
And the mother would weep that bore me,
If I stay'd my step for such strength as thine,
Or seven such churls before me.

44.

I have made my way with this little brown sword,
Where the war-steeds rush'd the throngest;
I have saved my breast with this little brown sword,
When the strife was at the strongest.

45.

It guarded me well in bonny Scotland,
When the Scotts and Graemes fought fervent;
And the steel that saved me by gentle Nith,
May do the same by Derwent.

46.

Fair fall thee, Outlaw, for that word!
Oh! Nith, thou gentle river,
When a bairn, I flew along thy banks,
As an arrow from the quiver.

47.

The roebucks run upon thy braes
Without a watch or warden;
And the tongue that calls thee a gentle stream
Is dear to Geordie Gordon.

48.

The Outlaw smiled, 'Tis a soldier's saye
That the Gordons, blythe and ready,
Ne'er stoop'd the plumes of their basnets bright
Save to a lovesome lady.

49.

Now by Saint Allan, the forester said,
And the Saint who slew the dragon;
And by this hand that wields the brand,
As wight as it tooms the flagon;

50.

It shall never be told of the Gordons' name,
Of a name so high and lordly,
That I took a gallant Outlaw in the toil,
And hanged him base and cowardly.

51.

I'll give thee the law of Lord Nithisdale,
A good lord of the border;
So take thy bow, thou gallant Outlaw,
And set thy shafts in order.

52.

And we will go each one to his stance,
With bows and arrows ready;
And thou shalt climb up Chatsworth bank,
Where the wood is wild and shady.

53.

And thou shalt stand on yon rough red rock,
With woodbine hung and bracken;
And shout three times o'er Derwent vale,
Till all the echoes waken.

54.

Then loose thy shafts, and slay a buck,
Fit for a monarch's larders;
And carry him free from Chatsworth park,
In spite of seven warders.

55.

Do this and live, and I do vow
By the white hand of my mother,
I'll smite him low who runs ere thou shout,
Were he Saint Andrew's brother.

56.

The Outlaw smiled; Good Gordon, he said,
I'll shout both high and gaily;
And smite a buck, and carry him off;
'Tis the work I'm bowne to daily.

57.

The Outlaw stood upon Chatsworth rock,
Like light his looks did gladden;
The sun was shining on Bakewell-Edge,
And on the heights of Haddon.

58.

The Outlaw stood upon Chatsworth rock,
He look'd to vale and mountain,
And gave a shout so shrill, the swans
Sprung up from stream and fountain.

59.

The Outlaw stood upon Chatsworth rock,
And shouted shrill and gaily;
Till the dun deer leap'd from brake and bower,
Two miles down Derwent valley.

60.

The Outlaw stood upon Chatsworth rock,
Looking o'er the vale so narrow;
And his voice flew fleet as away from the string
Starts off the thirsty arrow.

61.

And loudly it rung in Haddon-wood,
Where the deer in pairs were dernan:*
And loudly it rung in Haddon-hall,
And up rose Julia Vernon.

* *Dernan*, concealing. "Abusing and harming his Majesty's good subjects by their darned (concealed) stouths."—*Acts of James I. of England.* Anglo-Saxon, *dearn-an.*

62.

If ever I heard my true love's voice,
'Tis now through my bowers ringing;
His voice is sweet as the wild bird's note,
When the buds bloom to its singing.

63.

For well I know my true love's voice,
It sounds so gay and clearly:
An angel's voice in a maiden's ear
Would ne'er drop down so dearly.

64.

She took her green robe in a hand
White as the opening lily,
And the morning sun and the lovely maid
Look'd down on Chatsworth valley.

65.

Around the brow of the high green hill
The sun's fair beams were twining,
And bend and fall of the Derwent stream
In golden light were shining.

66.

The silver smoke from Chatsworth tower,
Like a pennon broad went streaming,
And gush'd against the morning sky,
And all the vale was gleaming.

67.

She gave one look on the broad green land,
And back her tresses sheddin',
With her snowy neck, and her bonnie blue eyes,
Came down from the hill of Haddon.

68.

She saw the wild dove start from its bower,
And heard the green boughs crashing;
And saw the wild deer leap from its lair,
And heard the deep stream dashing.

69.

And then she saw her own true love
Bound past by bush and hollow;
And after him seven armed men
With many a shout and hollo.

70.

Oh! had I but thy bow, my love,
And seven good arrows by me,
I'd make the fiercest of thy foes
Bleed ere they could come nigh thee.

71.

Oh! had I but thy sword, my love,
Thy sword so brown and ready,
I'd meet thy foes on Chatsworth bank,
Among the woodlands shady.

72.

On high she held her white white hands
In wild and deep devotion,
And locks and lips, and lith * and limb,
Were shivering with emotion.

73.

Nay, stay the chase, said a forester then,
For when the lion's roaring
The hound may hide :— May the raven catch
The eagle in his soaring?

* *Lith*, joint. Anglo-Saxon, *lith*.

74.

Farewell, my bow, that could send a shaft,
As the levin leaves the thunder!
A lady looks down from Haddon height
Has snapt thy strength asunder.

75.

A lady looks down from Haddon height,
O'er all men's hearts she's lordin';
Who harms a hair of her true love's head
Makes a foe of Geordie Gordon.

76.

The bank was steep,—down the Outlaw sprung,
The greenwood wide resounded;
The wall was high,—like a hunted hart
O'er it he fleetly bounded.

77.

And when he saw his love, he sunk
His dark glance in obeisance:
Comes my love forth to charm the morn,
And bless it with her presence?

78.

How sweet is Haddon hill to me,
Where silver streams are twining!
My love excels the morning star,
And shines while the sun is shining.

79.

She and the sun, and all that's sweet,
Smile when the grass is hoarest;
And here at her white feet I lay
The proud buck of the forest.

80.

Now farewell, Chatsworth's woodlands green,
Where fallow-deer are dernan;
For dearer than the world to me
Is my love, Julia Vernon !

THE END.

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